

Elementary English

Philosophy
Religion and
Education

FEBRUARY, 1950

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CHILDREN'S CREATIVE
EXPRESSION



SPELLING IN CONTEXT



PROBLEMS OF TELEVISION



UNDERSTANDING HUMAN
DIFFERENCES



PUPPETRY AND LANGUAGE



MEETING IN BUFFALO

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Elementary ENGLISH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 1950

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 73 | Form through Creative Expression
JUNE D. FEREBEE |
| 79 | Meaning Approach to Spelling
EDWARD J. RUTAN |
| 82 | Reading and Human Differences
MARGARET M. HEATON |
| 84 | It's Howdy Doody Time
ELSIELIESE THROPE |
| 88 | Creative Expression through Puppetry
GERTRUDE M. CLARK |
| 91 | Readiness for Reading
NILA BANTON SMITH |
| 107 | Using Magazines in School
JOHN J. DEBOER |
| 126 | The National Council of Teachers of English |
| 128 | Look and Listen |
| 133 | The Educational Scene |
| 137 | Review and Criticism |

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Learning Form Through Creative Expression

JUNE D. FEREBEE¹

Frankly, I do not teach any details or skills of creative writing and I doubt that my children learn any— at least not consciously. What I do strive to do is to provide a setting in which children can write stories freely and happily, and an opportunity to share their stories with their fellows. The second item is as important as the first, for of what use is the story teller without the listener? Then I watch with faith and hope and no little charity for any good techniques they may employ. The first evidences may be discouragingly meager. However, in so far as possible, I highlight them in some fashion, hoping thereby to cause them to multiply. Miraculously they do. But I often suspect that far more potent than any emphasis of mine is the unconscious "feel" of what made the audience respond. And I further doubt that my children ever deliberately strive for such things as a tempting beginning, a high point of interest, vivid action and characterization, an effective close; but that those things appear in their stories the ones I read to you will bear witness. Furthermore, techniques as they use them are part of the very fabric of the story. They sprang into being with it; hence they do not strike the strained or artificial note that special assignments on separate elements of story writing invariably call forth.

My belief is that all children have within them creative story power, and that my province is to unloose this power rather than to teach them how to use it. A child no more needs nor desires direction and supervision in story writing than he does in dressing up. It is a natural activity done for the sheer fun of it; and when it *is* fun stories come in abundance, and many of them have surprising vitality and original flavor. In this way children get much writing, much reading, much listening, and much satisfaction. As a result their power grows and expands through interested exercise. Even more important than the gains in English power are the wholesome changes worked in child personalities, but that is another story and a very gratifying one.

Early stories may be very poor, as is this skeletal tale of *Roger*, which Jimmie wrote in beginning fifth grade.

Once upon a time there was a little boy named Roger. Roger was walking across the deck of an ocean liner when suddenly a wave washed over the deck. Now Roger had found some driftwood. Roger had drifted to shore where he built a fire to keep warm. Finally Roger went to sleep. The next morning Roger saw a house. In

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the house was a witch. The witch said, "Do you want to go home?" Roger said, "Yes." And Roger stayed there one year.

Ragged as it was, Jimmie's story was not criticized, nor was he told how to make it better. It was accepted exactly as he gave it, and Jimmie was encouraged to write more. I find it far more fruitful to exercise a child's inventive power in creating new stories than to consume it in trimming and patching old ones. Besides, in the process of remodeling, the story usually dies. Furthermore, if creative writing is to have integrity the child must be free to concentrate on his story without having to wonder what the teacher is going to say about it.

Jimmie's first story gave him so much pleasure that he began writing copiously, and through such generous activity his stream of creative power must have clarified itself because before the year was out he was writing in rhythmical prose such interest-compelling tales as this one, which began—

It happened one day in a far-off land in the far-off times that there was a magnificent castle and in this castle there lived a king, as they do in all castles, and his name I think is familiar to you. It was King Bambino. But it was not because of King Bambino that so many people came to visit this magnificent palace. It was because of a youth who was said to be the strongest man in the world. He was strong by the aid of magic, but he was very strong anyway. This youth was named Chimino.

The first scene of my story starts out in the back part of the palace, where the birds were making all the noise they could, and the trees and grass were quite green. And back of all that there was a stream. Chimino was just going out with a pail to get water for King Bambino. He seemed very happy, but if he had known what was behind him, he wouldn't have been so

happy. Behind a great elm tree a dark-browed, shrew-eyed man was kneeling, and in his hands were a bow and arrow. He was just ready to shoot, when Chimino, walking up to a clear waterfall, noticed the reflection of the man kneeling and carefully aiming his arrow...

The story reads easily, partly because of the variety of the sentences, both in length and in structure. Nor are there any monotonous repetitions of words. I don't remember how the original copy looked, but probably it was pretty messy, for up to fifth grade Jimmy not only hadn't written, but he hadn't talked either very much or very plainly. I do remember that when he read the story each sentence shone out clearly as though every capital and period were in place. The much-belabored problem of sentence sense is primarily a matter of ear training, and I find that children have nice ears for sound when they have the opportunity to use them. In this short excerpt there were also bits of invention and suspense, two prime qualities of a good story.

I shall read to you from the writings of other children as evidence that many if not all the virtues of creative story writing appear of their own accord when the setting is right. Appreciation will help to bring them forth, contagion will help to spread them, and in the atmosphere of fun and friendliness children will absorb new techniques into the power they already possess without being aware that they have done so.

The stories I read will be bear stories because of all the characters about which my children have written, none other have appealed so warmly to their feelings and imaginations as have Sterling North's five bears— Eenie, Meenie, Meinie, Mo, and

Nig. Furthermore, it is interesting to note how, despite the use of the same characters, each child writes in a style that is uniquely his own. I am quite sure that they think of the bears as other children; yet they also know that imaginary bears can go beyond the prescribed limits of behavior and adventure as real children can never do. Thus, a writer is free to flit back and forth between the real and the unreal in typical childish fashion.

One of the rewards of having the story period a relaxed, non-teaching time seems to be that the children live their stories more vividly as they write. How else can I account for the consummate skill with which they interweave lively action and fluent, natural conversation? Many of their stories unroll like an action "talkie" done with sound effects and flashes of technicolor. Usually, too, there is an undercurrent of gentle humor, which crops out every now and again. Description is employed sparingly, but often much is suggested by a single telling word or phrase. No doubt part of the economy of their writing stems from the fact that their lagging pencils cannot keep pace with their racing brains.

Kent invented a series of tales involving the pigs, led by Tit, Tat, and Toe, and the bears. Here is his story, *The Fight*. Mo, being the baby bear, was not to be trusted with weapons.

The Fight

Tit and his army were getting ready for the fight with wooden swords and mud balls. He gave his last orders and saw that Toe was well guarded. Just then over the crest of the hill came Nig and his twenty Rough Riders, and with this army came marching a flag. From the flag came a voice saying, "Well, Nig—"

But Mo, who was the flag bearer, could not finish his sentence because a mud ball found its mark.

"Men," said Nig, "there is the enemy. Are you scared of a little mud? Why look at me, I'm facing—"

Sploosh, ooo, blub, splutter.

After wiping the mud off his face, Nig, under a small cloud of swearing, began his speech again. With a big confident smile he said, "Everybody who's with me say 'Yah'."

A hushed silence came over the army of bears huddled closely together. Nig's smile became almost invisible. Then he shouted, "Charge!"

Alone he rushed forward. Before he could do anything the army of pigs was upon him. There was a splash, a splosh, and a hollow-sounding bong as a wooden sword hit a bear's head.

The bears did not wait to see what had happened to their general, Nig, but retreated with the flag straggling after. There was a gust of wind as Nig passed them, doing what he called "covering the retreat."

When story writing gets under way, good beginnings become a commonplace. Even so I occasionally stop a reader after a particularly tempting start and suggest that probably the class won't care to hear more of his story, knowing full well that their groans and comments will belie my words and hoping, also, that my interruption will make them more aware of how effectively their interest has been caught. This is as close to direct teaching as I get. Sue's beginning of *Poor Mother Bear* was such a one.

Poor Mother Bear

"Oh dear, Oh dear," said Mother Bear in a strained, nervous voice, "I'm all a-jitter." Mother Bear was running around the breakfast table measuring corn meal mush into six little bowls. Just then there was heard a scrambling noise on the stairs

—a stumble, a crash. Mother Bear hurried out into the hall. There at the bottom of the stairs was a heap of brown fur, black noses, blue pants, and a few neckties. Mother Bear wiped her forehead.

"Are any of you hurt?" she said.

"Oh dear no," said a voice. It was Mo's. It came from the bottom of the pile.

Whereas good beginnings soon become plentiful, the effective close is much more rare. It is likely to appear first in the writings of the brighter children, and often—strangely enough—it is in those meager stories which only suggest the lively imaginings going on in the writer's head. And in fourth grade probably caught on a paper only every fourth or fifth sentence of her story, but her ending neatly and succinctly rounds off the theme suggested in the beginning.

California or Bust

One summer morning Eenie, Meenie, Meinie, Mo, and Nig started out. Each had a bundle on their arm. Nig was the last. On his back hung a sign, "California or bust." As they went along a tribe of Indians came down the hill. Nig was last and an Indian caught him and took him home to the tribe. They put him in a big pot. They were just ready to cook him when there was a big noise. The bears had put a jazz record on the victrola and were playing it full blast. The Indians went over to see what what it was. Meanwhile the bears untied Nig.

Meanwhile at home Mother Bear said, "Such peace and quiet without those pesty bears."

The next morning Mother Bear went into Eenie, Meenie, Meinie, Mo, and Nig's room. She almost fainted. There in bed were Eenie, Meenie, Meinie, Mo, and Nig. On the bed hung a sign, "WE BUSTED!"

A much more usual form is the one that starts out promisingly enough, but just when things are getting exciting the

story bogs down, and the author fastens on a quickly grabbed ending. Whether it is hand or invention that wavers I do not know. Betsy's story will illustrate what I mean.

The Fortune Teller

Nig had found a book called *The Fortune Teller*, and he had decided to become one for a modest profit. So he set up the attic to look like a fortune teller's room. He had gone to Cottonworth's and gotten a tencent box of Diller's Dirty Dust and sprinkled it over the attic to give a dirty effect. One day he invited his mother up to tell her fortune. He himself was in an old pair of his father's long underwear—bright red. He sat on one side of the table. His mother sat on the other side. The table was old and wobbly, and one leg was off. He looked into his mother's eyes as the book had said and quoted, "I see a tall, furry bear."

Mrs. Bear, on the verge of getting hysterical, said, "But I have already met a tall, furry bear."

Just then the radio said, "Enter the Diller's Dirty Dust contest." Nig ran down to get his can of Diller's to get the label.

"Oh my!" said Mrs. Bear.

Time was when I would have urged Betsy to finish her story, but not any more. Instead we appreciate how a few suggestive details make us see the attic, and we may laugh at the good names—Cottonworth's and Diller's Dirty Dust. It is through cleverly invented names that children often reveal their interest in words—Dr. Pinkpill, Miss Pastypuss, Professor Get-em-up Gush-em, who had a radio program, and Grandmother Knit-for-Britain. Children enjoy words. When they imagine vividly they use them with surprising economy and fitness.

Phyllis's story of *Mo's New Coat* begins abruptly and has a rather stock ending, but we never expect a single story to

have in it every good thing. In this one there is an effective interplay of action and conversation, and the characters reveal themselves largely through their reactions to one another. Throughout the story Phyllis has used words well, and there is one that is perfectly chosen—*wrapped*.

Mo's New Coat

"Nig," called Mother Bear, "come here and bring Mo."

In came Nig dragging Mo by the ear, but he let go when he saw Mother Bear, and held him gently by the hand.

"Why are you crying, Mo dear?" said Mother Bear.

"Oh," said Mo sniffing and holding his ear, "er—" Just then he saw Nig with his fist in fighting form. "Er-r, nothing, Mother."

"WELL!" said Mother Bear. "I want you, Nig," she said raising her voice, for she saw Nig sticking his finger in the sugar bowl.

Nig turned a round and started twiddling his sticky thumbs angelically. "Yes, Mother," he said.

"I want you," repeated Mother Bear, "to go with Mo and get him a new coat. And see that it fits well. I am too busy to go. And please be back quickly," she added, jerking Nig's finger out of the sugar bowl again. "And charge it," she said, pushing them out. "Good-by. Oh, if there ever was the likes of them," she said sitting down. "Whew!"

Meanwhile at the store Nig was trying on coats. He took the biggest one. "This will fit you nicely, Mo darling," he said and wrapped it on Mo. He told the man the address and left.

"But, Niggy dear," said Mo, "it's too big. Mother said I should have a size 13 and you've got size 40."

"Aren't you satisfied?" said Nig showing his fist.

"Why—er—yes, Niggy, I am," said Mo trembling. "Y-y-yes, sh-sh-suree I am."

"Come on, then," said Nig roughly. "We'll never get home if you don't hurry."

DING! "Why hello, Nig," said Mother. "Where's Mo?"

"There," said Nig, pointing to a large coat with two legs sticking out. "There he is."

"Oh," said Mother Bear sternly, "is that Mo's new coat? Well," said Mother Bear taking Nig over her knee, "you can march right back to the store and get the coat changed, and no allowance for you this week."

Five minutes later a bedraggled bear started off in the direction of the coat store holding a coat and his seat.

In my reading I have tried to suggest the dramatic fashion in which the children read their own stories, but I cannot portray the very obvious pleasure they have in doing so. Dana in her absorption and delight used to wriggle herself half way across the room during her reading.

My last story is one that I have used several times before, because it is particularly apt for a meeting of teachers. It is a very childish story written by Louise when she was ten, but every time I read it I marvel at the adroitness with which she has revealed the jealousy of Miss Flower and the hypocrisy of Miss Brown.

"Children, I have a treat for you," said Miss Flower, the bears' teacher, "a special treat."

"What is it?" asked the class in chorus "Is it ice cream and cake?"

"Oh, no, much better than that," said the teacher. "Miss Brown— she is one of the teachers in a western university—she has come to see how boys and girls act."

Miss Brown smiled and began to speak. "I love to come and visit schools and see the boys and girls. You remind me of my childhood. I teach older boys and girls, but they are almost grown up while you are just beginning life. How I envy Miss Flower, your beloved teacher, for she has you with her every day."

Miss Flower was very jealous of Miss Brown, but she hid her own feeling and offered Miss Brown her chair. She didn't know that Nig had put a tack in the chair. Miss Brown sat down. Miss Brown got up rather fast and started for the door.

"I never did like children," she said as she started through the door.

"You shouldn't have done that, children," said Miss Flower, but she gave them each ten cents to buy a Good Humor with.

This is a program for elementary children. Its purpose is to establish in the child confidence in his innate power and joy in using it. Later comes the time to prune and develop and re-shape what he has created.

This is not, however, a *laissez faire* program. At its best it calls for the most alert and sensitive kind of direction and stimulation. It means building an atmosphere of gracious, and receptive listening,

relieving the fears of the timid and the overtaught,

fending off negative criticism

making children aware of what is good,

stirring the sluggish and deepening the shallow,

making sure that every sincere effort, however poorly executed,

brings enough satisfaction to the child to make him want to try again,

cultivating the imagination through reading to children, but never,

either directly or indirectly, subjecting a child's effort to comparison with an adult product,

heightening sensory awareness,

keeping alive the zest in writing, and finally

being wise enough to halt the activity temporarily when creativity runs thin.

The list of story-telling virtues I have tried to suggest is almost too long for summarization, and yet they have appeared naturally in those stories as well as in many more because children were creating freely for no other reward than their own inner satisfaction. For every story that is outstanding there are countless ones that are poor; yet in the most meager spontaneous product a child is voluntarily bending his effort toward the mastery of his mother tongue. And rare indeed is the story that has not at least a glimmer of one of the qualities that go to make up the substance and the style of good literature. Why then do we struggle to teach what children innately know? Why not instead help them to draw upon this inner wisdom, and through plentiful use to clarify it and make it more consciously their own. When a child comes to accept and to respect his own thinking and his own way of expressing it, his power through use will inevitably mature in step with his developing mind; and he will find English, not an imposed program of mental gymnastics, but a useful and satisfying instrument for revealing what he really thinks and feels.

A Meaning Approach to Spelling

EDWARD J. RUTAN¹

Teachers who are concerned with the teaching of spelling may find this meaning approach to it refreshing as well as effective. Moreover, this method may be adapted to any grade level and may be made without changing any of the spelling rules or presenting to pupils any misspelled words (unacceptable combinations of letters to which no meaning can be ascribed). The emphasis is, rather than just on spelling skill, on the right word in context. The following sample exercise will serve to illustrate this technique, particularly for the lower levels of elementary school:

THE LITTLE LETTER THAT ISN'T THERE

A letter has been omitted from one of the words of each sentence. Find where it is missing and what letter should be added to that word to make it the right one.

THE LITTLE ENGINE

The other engines in the freight yard always pulled the new box cars over the ails. The little engine ever had a chance to pull them. But one day one of the other locomotives could move the newest freight car in the yard. Hen the small engine coupled onto the heavy new car. Puffing and huffing, huffing and puffing, the little locomotive finally moved it over the tacks. Now the little engine does no have to pull the box cars in the freight yard anymore.

Every misspelled word in "The Little Engine" is really a word out of context. Thus *ails* should be *rails*, *ever never*, *one none*, *Hen Then*, *tacks tracks*, and *no not*; yet every word is a valid one if used meaningfully. Ask the pupils what *ails* the other engines, and vocabulary can be built. Con-

sider the difference in meaning between *tacks* and *tracks* and so on; correlation of the language arts is never amiss; who can tell what gains pupils can make, not only in spelling and vocabulary but in *thinking through symbols*? When the meaning of a passage (sentence, paragraph, chapter, etc.) turns upon *one* letter of a word can any pupil afford to be careless about spelling (penmanship), especially if it helps to unlock the meaning of a story or account of interest to him?

Pupils can be encouraged to make up oral as well as written exercises in which they attempt to stump their classmates. Material of this character can serve as an excellent substitute for the dull spelling drill and old spelling bee. It will also serve to make them aware of the fact that everyone has the tendency to leave off or out a letter of a word when he writes, or a syllable when he speaks, which accounts for a great deal of the mistakes in the use of language. Hence it is wise to read with a critical eye to note the *little letter that isn't there* or to listen with a critical ear to note the *little sound that isn't there*.

After pupils have become thoroughly accustomed to this device, one sentence in which there are no errors may appear in every paragraph. Let this particular sentence occur unexpectedly, now in the beginning, then near the end, later in the middle, etc. In this way careful attention will be demanded at all times because not

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every sentence, every time, will have a word with a missing letter. Longer continuous discourse of greater difficulty may be introduced as the pupils progress. The teacher may also rewrite some of the passages of the class textbooks, using the missing letter technique, and have them mimeographed or on the blackboard to insure thorough reading and accurate spelling as well as to review.

Exercises in which two letters of a word are missing may be introduced later on when the teacher deems it necessary. The following sentences will serve not only to illustrate key sentences from which passages (experience and information charts as well as more advanced work) may be built but the type of words that lend themselves to this kind of procedure:

1. How long have you walk? (walked)
2. Let the lady rough the aisle. (through)
3. How ten do I have to take these pills? (often)
4. That new rocket has great owe! (power)
5. The plant will reach its full grow soon. (growth)

Any of the various word lists (Thorndike, Rinsland, *et al.*) will furnish ample as well as graded word supplies, but the simplest list to start with seems to be the Ogden list (Basic English), since these particular 850 words offer a firm foundation upon which to build the rest. However, the best source are the words the pupils themselves use and misuse in and out of the classroom.

Here is a sample exercise, graded higher than the first one, that the writer constructed from some of the misspellings found in the writing as well as in the

speech of pupils of upper grammar-school age:

UP IN THE AIR

There are letters missing in some of the words in this paragraph. Find the words and tell what each one should be.

Jimmy shined up the tree to get a clear view of the airfield. Holding tightly to a limb, he saw the great planer of experimental aircraft, Howard Hazen, me onto the field. He could not see that Hazen's faced was scared, but he had see and read about it in the newspapers. He a great dining was heard as the engines started and the mystery plane took off. As it disappeared from sight, Jim heard a taping nearby. Looking above him, he saw a woodpecker hoping up he tree trunk.

The ten incorrect or misspelled words in UP IN THE AIR should be changed to shinned, planner, come, scarred, seen, Then, dinning, tapping, hopping, the.

Another variation of this meaning approach is the extra letter type (too-many-letters-spoil-the-word) of exercise, illustrated by the following sample sentences:

1. Is there any rice in the freezer? (ice)
2. Now is no time to quiet the job. (quit)
3. She had never meet Gloria's mother. (met)
4. He wished that he had never been borne. (born)
5. Thank you for a every nice time. (very)

The following exercise represents a cumulative test that may be given to pupils in junior high school after they have learned the missing letter and extra letter techniques:

SALMON

Recopy this passage so that every word makes sense.

Most fish live in neither fresh or slat water, but the salmon an live in both kind of water. This fish is born in a fresh-water stream and later swims own the river to the ocean. A salmons weigh over sixty ponds when it has grow to full size.

Very ear salmon swim to the rivers in which they were or, leaping up waterfalls an over rocks. Then the female makes a hole in the sand with her ail and lay her eggs in it. Both the male and male die sortly afterwards and the hole story begin over gain hen the eggs hatch out.

The twenty correct words in *Salmon* are as follows: either, can, kinds, down, salmon, weighs, pounds, grown, Every, year, born, and, tail, lays, female, shortly, whole, begins, again, when.

The tendency to transpose or reverse the letters in words may also be employed in preparing exercises. Frequently these errors may be found in the writing of the pupils, which can be used in constructing sentences similar to the following:

1. That jet plane climbs like a homesick angle. (angel)
2. My brother works on a diary farm. (dairy)
3. The Smiths evil on Mitchell Street. (live)
4. My mane is George Brown. (name)
5. All I want is peace and quite. (quiet)

Oftentimes wrong letters are used in writing a word, as in these sample sentences:

1. I wander who he is. (wonder)
2. Jim's neck is a bit staff today. (stiff)
3. Where can I fine the teacher? (find)
4. He climbed the tank of the tree. (trunk)
5. When is Christmas vocation? (vacation)

Practically every type of misspelling can come into this last type of exercise.

WINGS

Some of the words in this passage are not right. Write them right.

The desire to be propelled though the hair lead to the invention of the airplane, for men make subtle schemes and complex devices to attain deferred as well as immediate arms. It is not surprising that you have benefited from the inventions of mankind. Man as eve stopped in is quest for the new, the better, the excellent. Referring to all sources of knowledge and assisted by others, men has hopped and striven to achieve his dreams. So bee it!

The ten word in *Wings* that are the right ones are as follows: through, air, led, aims, has, never, his, man, hoped, be.

If a pupil changes the form of a word already correctly spelled and used, such as *immediate* for *immediate*, that constitutes an error. Furthermore, the teacher should include as many spelling demons in the context of the exercises as possible, but each one should be spelled correctly. Pupils attempting to change these should be given extra help.

In exercises of this character the focus of the pupil's attention is always drawn to the meaning. Thus the spelling turns upon the word that must be lettered and used right in order that the sentence in which it appears makes sense. Countless other variations will suggest themselves to the teachers who use the meaning approach to spelling herein offered as one means of dealing with the problem of teaching spelling, especially in elementary English.

Reading To Understand Human Differences

MARGARET M. HEATON¹

Learning to Meet Differences in Family Life and Community Patterns

Most children learn about one or two, possibly three kinds of family life from their own experience, their neighbors and relatives, and their school mates. They may wonder about how other people do things, like the six-year old boy whose widowed mother was a teacher and had a very limited budget. One night he asked her at the dinner table, "Mother, the teacher says every family has a Daddy. Where will we get one?" Another day he said, "I spelled out the advertisements, 'People wine and dine and dance' for Christmas holidays, can't we do that?" Wistfully, this little boy wanted to know about other ways of living, but had no reality experiences to suggest how people did things in other families, what were adult pleasures and what were children's pleasures, or how fathers were part of families.

It is important that teachers find ways of estimating what information, concepts, and feelings children are learning in their own families and neighborhoods. Pictures drawn as individual projects or spontaneous stories will reveal whether children think of the school nurse, the attendance supervisor, and the policeman as their friends and the friends of their parents or as "boogey men," enemies and "punishers" of children. Comments on stories or pictures put up for display will reveal whether children are conscious of economic differences, racial distinctions, age barriers. Teachers need diagnostic devices to see what false notions, what limited

ideas, what hostile feelings their particular children are learning. When they have estimated the ideas that need extending, the false information or concepts that need correction, the hostilities that need understanding, teachers can plan to use books and stories as one approach to understanding differences.

Teachers can use books as one way of stimulating the discussion in which children tell each other of different ways of doing things. In one classroom where children were discussing breakfast, a number of the class seemed a little shocked because the Chinese boy ate meat and bamboo sprouts and the Mexican boy ate beans with tomato sauce. But when they considered that protein, carbohydrates, and vitamins were important in every breakfast, they said, "Beans and tomato sauce may give about the same food values as oatmeal and orange juice."

Teachers can use books as one way of developing friendly and accepting attitudes toward people from backgrounds different from their own but with the same problems. Children from newcomer families understand how the hero of *Skid* felt whether or not their own friends are Negro children. They appreciate the difficulties of *A Boy Named John* when he was teased about his clothes and his name even though their families are old stock American.

Teachers can use books as a means of

¹Polytechnic High School, San Francisco. This paper was presented at the Chicago convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, November, 1948.

stimulating exploration of the larger community in which their neighborhood school is located. If a book like *Melindy's Medal* tells about housing projects, children and their parents may be encouraged to discover how people live in slum sections and in local housing projects and what the problems of recreation, comfort, family life are in each case.

Teachers can use books as a means of helping children extend their understanding of how people different from themselves solve problems. This kind of extension may help children compare experiences of pioneers with experiences of modern urban communities and sharpen their appreciation of the resources available to them today. What could a pioneer family do when the baby of the family was taken sick? What can we do?

We need to consider briefly how the teacher sets the classroom climate for understanding differences. She herself must be a person who is not shocked or disturbed by unconventional ways of doing things—by family arrangements necessitated by meager income, poor housing, inadequate training in the use of leisure. Children must be free enough to reveal what they do and feel and think with her. She must have the skill and tact to set the stage so that children talk freely with each other. She must choose those topics with sufficient common core of interest and concern that children talk freely. She must set problems and questions in such a way

that children not only generalize about ways of doing things, but take on appreciations, feelings, and acceptances from the group experience. The "how" to teach about differences is slowly learned and every teacher must work out for herself step by step the process of doing it and in doing so she will see more clearly the world her children live in and their emotional and intellectual needs. She will plan more adequately for the social skills they must learn and the ways of thinking they develop.

I can quote briefly a question from a teacher who was a bit startled by what she learned from her children and yet not afraid to consider the implications for her classroom procedure.

"I was quite disturbed the other day because my kindergarten children rearranged the furniture in the play house in a way that upset my designed corners—one for kitchen, one for sitting room, etc. In talking it over, I said, 'Does the bed belong in the dining room? Does your mama keep your clothes on the ice box?' Their unsurprised affirmative answers made me realize many of them lived in one room, so of course this kind of living would be duplicated in the playhouse. How much could I do to give them any other idea about a situation they couldn't change? Should I try to? What are 'right' ways for these children? Can they learn a little about how other people live without feeling ashamed of how they live?"

It's Howdy Doody Time

ELSIELIESE THROPE¹

Five thirty to six thirty is the charmed hour in our home. That's when the children stretch out on the carpet around the TV set, curl up in a chair and watch "their" shows. They laugh at Howdy Doody, frown at grumpy Mr. Bluster, and listen to Big Brother. Above all, they are quiet, blissfully quiet. They are safe, they are happy, they are out of the way. Mother heaves a sigh of relief...

Most mothers feel that of all the hours of the day, the pre-dinner rush is the hardest for them. Tired, hungry children have a way of getting underfoot in the kitchen while the family meal is being prepared. The baby needs its bath and bottle, father comes home weary and hungry, usually in no mood to help until he has had his dinner, too. The burden therefore falls on the mother who has to be cook, pacifier, and maid at the same time. All that at the end of a busy day for herself. No wonder tempers are often strained at that time. It's precisely at this psychological moment that thousands of American families turn on their TV set and let Howdy Doody take over for a while. Even the wildest children sit quietly, as if spellbound, as they watch the antics of the little wooden puppet, and peace and serenity descends on the home while mother goes quietly about her business.

This technological "babysitter" is moving into an increasing number of homes. Probably because of the reasons just mentioned families with children far outnumber those without as TV owners. Naturally

there are problems connected with the introduction of a TV set into the home, just as there are blessings. Some of these problems were pointed up in a recent survey made among parents in the metropolitan area of New York:

One of the most common difficulties seemed to be a *social* one. Parents complained that since they had acquired the set their home was literally "overrun" by children who were anxious to watch the show. While they did not want to be "antisocial" or "unneighborly," they were concerned about the wear and tear on their furniture and home. A few had observed, too, that quarrels were likely to arise within the group of children gathered around the set and therefore had been forced to stay with the group "to keep an eye on them." What had started as a pleasant pastime for their own children had developed into a neighborhood attraction. Some of these parents were not too happy about it, and rued the day when they had bought the set. Yet, they felt they did not want to be "unkind" to the visiting children. They were therefore unable to put a stop to the situation.

In discussing it with other parents, however, many parents realized that their own "kindness" was defeating the purpose of these shows. Many of the regular visitors, the "habitués," had become quite nonchalant about the shows. It had become a habit to "go to Freddie's house"

¹Mrs. Thrope is a regular contributor to *Parents' Magazine* and other child guidance periodicals.

late each afternoon, nothing more. If their visits had been spaced over a number of days or a week, even, the thrill of being invited to watch the show would not have worn off so easily. A few had come each evening to avoid unpleasant chores at their own homes! It seemed advisable therefore that each parent do some "weeding out" among the guests his children brought home in the evening—the way parents used discrimination in the selection of their own friends. Or, when the child was old enough, he might be permitted to select his own guests for TV shows, maybe after discussing it with his mother. Troublemakers were to be discouraged, as were restless or noisy children. Many parents found that a group of two or three children at most was best—they were less inclined to get into fights or think up mischief. Generally, these smaller groups could be left alone during the show, without an adult's presence. They were therefore most desirable from the parent's point of view. Depending on the age of the child and his adjustment to other children, each parent has to decide for himself how many children make for the *happiest arrangement*. That—and that alone—should be the criterion—not their desire to be "social."

Another problem was brought up by the mother of a four year old girl. While Patsy had been an "angel" about going to bed in the past, she now gave her parents all kinds of trouble. Either she would refuse to turn the TV set off when they told her it was bedtime, or, if they turned it off for her, she would have a tantrum. Other evenings she would go to bed willingly enough, but run out innumerable times for just one more look at the beloved set.

The parents were at their wits' end—and cursed the set. Instead of pleasure it had given them nothing but trouble. In addition, because of the late hours she had been keeping, Patsy was irritable most of the time and difficult for them all to live with.

Obviously this situation is one of *discipline* rather than of TV: while the TV set had precipitated the problem, wise handling at the outset would have put a stop to it easily enough. It seemed unfair to blame it on TV—it might have been created by other factors just as readily.

This is more the problem of parents who don't know when to say "no" and to stick to it than anything else. True, the first few days the child may be truly excited about the new "arrival" and it may be necessary to humor him to some extent. Gradually the novelty will wear off. In most cases it does not take more than a week, and more rigid rules about bedtime, etc., can be enforced again. In other cases—and remember each child responds differently—it may be possible or even necessary to lay down the law already on the first day, and then to stick to it before a "bad habit" has been acquired. The parent's knowledge of the child will help him determine the right course, but in each case some added firmness may be called for at the beginning. When the set is turned on for the grownups after the children are in bed, it should be kept low so it won't disturb them, at least until they are asleep.

Another interesting situation was introduced by Michael's mother. Her five year old was using the family TV as a means of "lording it" over his TV-less

friends. "If you don't give me your ball I won't let you watch TV tonight," he was overhead saying to one of them. Naturally, the child gave him the ball. Another child was bullied into sharing his ice cream stick with him that way. Determined not to make an issue of it, the mother casually suggested to her boy that he use other methods in dealing with his friends or soon they "might not like to come to his house any more." She also decided that the guest-for-the-evening was to be chosen by Michael and her *together*. The choice was to be made early in the morning and was not to be influenced by anything that might occur later on during the day—such as a fight with that particular child. Thus the mother had a chance to see to it that every child in the group got a chance to watch by rotating among the group—and at the same time Michael no longer was able to rule the roost!

Other parents complained that their children would interrupt meals to run into the living room and look at TV or insist on having their meals served in front of the TV set. While here again it seemed to be a question of discipline, some parents admitted that they actually encouraged their children to eat with the TV set on, they dawdled less and "ate better." But these parents were the exception rather than the rule.

One mother pointed out how much more easily her child could tear himself away from his outdoor activities and come home, now that TV shows were luring him in. And which mother can deny that Hoppalong Cassidy can beckon more successfully than mere mother calling for dinner?

Yes, there are pitfalls and problems but certainly none serious enough to overcome. The most common concern of all the parents interviewed seemed to be, however, what TV would do—or was doing—to their children's *eyes*. They had heard and read a great deal about eye strain and were anxious to keep it to a minimum so their children wouldn't have to wear glasses. Some parents felt so strongly about this that they refused to buy a set to safeguard their children's eyes.

When this point was discussed with a few doctors the consensus was that generally children who watch TV sets, especially school children, do not use their eyes *more* than they would if they did not have the sets in their home. The time spent in front of the set is the time they would ordinarily be spending *reading* before dinner—funny books, at that! Watching TV shows has not been found to be harder on their eyes than reading would be. When the child complains about fatigue in his eyes he should rest them for a few hours or even days, as he would if he had been reading to much. Two factors, however, were considered to be important for the child watching the show: One was *distance* from the screen, the other *light* in the room according to the *Journal* of the American Medical Association. As for distance, the child's eyes were found to suffer the least possible strain when the distance from the screen was 10 feet or more. This was found to be better than a shorter distance, provided the size of the room and the size of the screen permitted it. A larger screen was found to be more advantageous for the same reason—it gave a clearer image at a larger distance. It was felt to be more restful to the eye to have

the child see the picture *straight in front* of him rather than at an angle as he might if he sat diagonally across from the set.

As for light in the room: *Daylight screens* were generally considered to be better since they were compatible with more light in the room. Thus the often glaring contrast between the screen and surrounding objects was reduced considerably. It was almost as if the child were looking at the pages of his picture book—and such interesting, lively, talking pages they were!

Thus, the greatest bugaboo of the TV owner—will it hurt my children's eyes? —seems to have been dispelled. As larger screens are developed and TV sets are further improved these hazards will diminish too. A word of warning, though. Just as it is often necessary to limit a child's reading-time, thus his TV time will have to be curtailed to prevent unnecessary eye strain. Young children especially don't know when "they have had enough" and the parent will have to set a time limit for him. About one hour a day seems to be right for the young pre-school and school child, proportionately more as the child gets older. And of course, on special occasions an occasional overdose of TV shows will not hurt!

Television is getting increasingly aware of its educational role. Mr. I. Magination, for example, dramatizes interesting events in history for his young audience—such as the Travels of Marco Polo, the crowning of Queen Elizabeth, the life of Benjamin Franklin. Some parents were also quite delighted with the "Cleanliness" campaigns run by other programs. Thus,

Big Brother on "Small Fry" repeatedly advised the youngsters to remember to brush their teeth and wash their hands. During the polio epidemic last summer this cleanliness was stressed quite emphatically but without alarming the children. While Big Brother demonstrated humorously "how to wash," his young audience watched delightedly, smiled—and remembered! Mother no longer had to remind—after all, Big Brother was doing it for her!

There is no doubt about it—TV has revolutionized the home—especially the nursery. Like radio, comics, and movies, it has come to play a tremendous part in the recreation and pastime of the school child. Like these other media, it inducts him into the civilization into which he is born. Inevitably his elemental emotions as well as his phantasy are stirred. To that extent it serves the true function of *play*. But, as Gesell of the Yale Child Guidance Clinic has pointed out, "They [radio, movies, etc] —are a poor substitute for the more basic type of play which comes from inner urges and which expresses the initiative and resourcefulness of the growing mind. Carried to excess, these recreational facilities lead to superficiality and neglect natural old-fashioned play. Television will aggravate the present imbalance in play diet, if not offset by more active forms of self expression."

Television, if kept under control, can be a delightful addition to a home. Instead of growing into an untameable monster it can be—and should be—a well-behaved, ever-ready, and ever-popular member of the family.

Creative Expression Through Puppetry

GERTRUDE M. CLARK¹

Adults as well as children are fascinated and delighted by the ingenuity displayed in puppet and marionette shows—on the screen, on the stage, and on the radio. Puppetry creates a pleasant atmosphere in which learning may be carried on. It is not only a source of amusement, but when used in the classroom it may become a very stimulating force. Bright children, average children, and slow children are all interested in working with puppets.

Children who do not wish to manipulate a puppet may be very helpful in making or stringing them. Manipulating a marionette is not so simple as it may appear. To operate one successfully requires a high degree of muscular control fused with the ability to dramatize and speak simultaneously. In the process of acquiring sufficient skill, children like to help one another.

This article presents an account of a year's language unit centered around the theme of puppetry. Since the puppets and marionettes were of all types, the terms have been used interchangeably throughout this article.

Work on this unit began during the first month of school and continued until the close of school. Each child was permitted to have his own Marionette or puppet, but was not required to make it. Interest was focused on the handling of puppets rather than on the making. The teacher arranged for every puppet and its

owner to take part in the shows. It may be noted that the marionettes used in the fall program were used again in the spring performances. New scripts were arranged and a few new marionettes were added but, for the most part, the same puppets were used throughout the year.

Puppet shows can be very adaptable so as to include few or many children. In this unit even the part of the narrator was always shared by many different children. The narratives served to develop continuity of thought, yet divided the program into various scenes, any one of which might constitute a single performance.

Throughout the school year small troupes of children entertained in other classrooms. The big programs had repeat performances to accommodate different groups of children in the school. Two programs were presented for the parents to attend. The nature of this unit was such that it synchronized several types of classroom work into a panoramic view of school life. An outlined account of the language unit is given below.

I. General Objectives:

- A. To insure genuine pleasure and heightened interest in school activities
- B. To develop powers of coordination, the head, the hand, the emotions
- C. To develop imagination and power to visualize

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- D. To develop appreciation of subjects taught in school
- E. To discover and develop creative abilities
- F. To motivate reading, writing, and speaking
- G. To correlate and synchronize various phases of classroom work
- H. To teach worthy use of leisure

II. Democratic Objectives:

- A. Participation of all children
- B. Choosing of character roles by classmates on the basis of try-outs
- C. Assignment of parts based on individual talents and effort
- D. "Leading out" inhibited children
- E. Encouraging desire for group participation and group control
- F. Instilling love of democratic principles
- G. Instilling an appreciation of Uncle Sam as a visual symbol of democracy
- H. Training children to respect the rights and privileges of others

III. Language Objectives:

- A. Knowledge and application of good poetry and prose selections
- B. Becoming acquainted with the best writers
- C. Experience in speaking before an audience
- D. Learning to read in unison
- E. Increasing vocabulary

- F. Careful pronunciation of words and clear enunciation

IV. Activities:

- A. Making puppets and marionettes
- B. Stringing puppets and marionettes
- C. Reading books in order to become acquainted with fictional characters
- D. Selecting character parts
- E. Writing character parts
- F. Memorizing poems and narrative parts
- G. Trying out for parts
- H. Learning songs
- I. Practice in oral reading
- J. Practice in choral reading
- K. Letters to parents
- L. Working through committee membership

V. Outcomes:

- A. Pleasant diversion from the three R's
- B. Inspiration for children to begin hobbies
- C. Broadened reading interests
- D. Familiarity with outstanding writers of poetry and prose
- E. Growth in oral English

VI. Culminating Programs:

- A. "From Behind the Book-Ends," Bookweek marionette show
 - 1. Characters: Pollyanna, Huckleberry Finn, Cinderella, Bozo, Burt Bobbsey, Mother Goose, Black Beauty, Peter Rabbit, Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Young Peter

Rabbit, Tar Baby, Heidi,
Uncle Sam, Hiawatha,
Nokomis, Six other Indi-
ans, Alice in Wonderland,
Red Riding Hood, Rag-
gedy Ann

B. "The Littlest Angel," a
Christmas story presented
with shadow puppets

C. Christmas poems, stories, and
songs

D. "A Language Review"

1. Narrative

- a. "Your Flag and My
Flag," individual recita-
tion
- b. Puppet, Uncle Sam, di-
recting patriotic num-
bers
- c. "The American Flag,"
choral reading
- d. Salute to the flag, di-
rected by Uncle Sam
- e. "America," sung by
class and directed by
Uncle Sam

2. Narrative

"Open Roads," individ-
ual recitation

3. Narrative

"Hiawatha," puppet
show

- (1) Characters: Hia-
Watha, Nokimis,
Papoose, two In-
dian maids, three
Indian braves
- (2) Songs: "The Sun-
rise Dance,"
"Grinding Corn,"

"Little Hiawa-
tha," "The Indian
Hunter"

4. Narrative

"Little Boy Blue,"
choral, responsive read-
ing

5. Narrative

Marionette number

- (1) Characters: Bold
Pirate, Lady Love
- (2) Song: "Paper of
Pins"

6. Narrative

- a. "My Shadaw," individ-
ual recitation
- b. "The Spider and the
Fly," puppet show
Characters: Spider, Fly,
class as narrator

7. Narrative

"Uncle Remus," mario-
nette show

- (1) Characters: Uncle
Remus, Sonny
Boy, A Blue Bird,
A Woodpecker
- (2) Songs: "Zippedy
Zoo Di," "The
Woodpecker"

8. Narrative

"Tom Sawyer"

- (1) Characters: Tom
Sawyer, Huck
Finn, Aunt Polly,
Becky
- (2) Songs: "Lazy
Bones," "School
Days," "Happy
School Days"

(Continued on Page 137)

Readiness for Reading II

NILA BANTON SMITH¹

Intellectual Readiness

The relationship between intelligence and reading has been the subject of numerous investigations. The results are so commonly known that there is no point in entering into a detailed summary of such investigations here. Suffice it to say that investigation has furnished considerable data supporting these conclusions:

1. When intelligence tests are used in conjunction with other tests, intelligence is one of the most significant indices in predicting readiness for beginning reading. (35, 73, 75)
2. Intelligence is a major factor in reading success at any level, (35, 44, 51, 78, 81, 89, 90).
3. Too many bright children are failing at all levels. (51, 53, 70, 78, 88, 90)
4. A mental age of from 6 to 6½ years is considered by many investigators to be essential for success in beginning reading. (77, 79, 81, 84, 86, 93)
5. No one mental age is a guarantee of beginning reading success. (71, 74, 76, 77, 80, 82, 85, 87)

None of these conclusions are in urgent need of discussion except the last two. The conclusion in regard to the mental age of 6 to 6½ being essential for success in beginning reading has had widespread acceptance and in many cases is being used as the sole criterion for deciding when a child is ready to begin reading. In some places where intelligence tests are not available, teachers are all too often using the chronological age of 6 to 6½ as the criterion for deciding when reading instruction should begin.

In view of these conditions it might be worthwhile to broaden perspective in regard to this matter by a brief discussion of some studies bearing on the conclusion that "no one mental age is a guarantee of reading success."

Gates made a study of four different groups who were taught by different methods and materials. It was found that in one group a mental age of five years was sufficient; in a second group it was a half-year higher; the third group required a mental age of about six years; in the fourth group, children with a mental age of six years and five months fared none too well and some of those with mental ages of seven years or above had difficulty. Gates concluded from this experiment that in spite of adequate mental age as determined by other studies children were successful or unsuccessful largely in terms of the type of instruction and materials which were provided to them. Gates (76) concludes that "statements concerning necessary mental age at which a pupil can be entrusted to learn to read are essentially meaningless."

A very significant study was conducted by Bigelow (71) who reported the progress of under-age children from grade 1 through 4. Her conclusions were as follows:

1. If a child is chronologically between six years old and six years and four months old and has an intelligence quotient of 110 or over, he is practically certain to succeed in school.
 2. A child less than six years old chronologically with an intelligence quotient of 120 or over will succeed, but personality factors should be considered.
 3. If a child is below six years old chronologically and has an intelligence quotient below 110, his chance of success is small. It would be much better for such children not to attempt the work of Grade I until later.
 4. Children below six years old chronologically with intelligence quotients of 110-119 (and children chronologically between six years old and six years and four months old with intelligence quotients of 100-109) have a fair
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chance of success. Children in this group should be studied carefully, consideration being given to their social, emotional, and physical development, home conditions, etc.

5. If a child is below six years old chronologically and has a mental age of six years and ten months or above, he is practically certain to succeed in school. If his mental age is between six years and eight months and six years and nine months, inclusive he has a good chance of success.

6. A child who is chronologically below six years and four months of age and whose mental age is below six years has practically no chance of success.

7. A child chronologically below six years of age with a mental age between six years and six years and seven months, with a mental age between six years and six years and three months, inclusive, has some chance of success if he is sufficiently mature physically, socially, and emotionally.

Bigelow's last statement is supported by Gilmartin (77) who concludes that it would be reasonable to expect normal progress from children admitted to first grade at chronological ages of five years and three months if they have an I. Q. of 114 or better and a mental age of six years or more.

Pauli (82) reported that he taught his daughter (I. Q. 120) to recognize and to write various letters and simple words when she was four years old. Roslow (87) as a result of an experiment in providing a special program of readiness activities concluded that children with a mental age below 6 can be taught to read. Roguse (85) concluded that a five year mental age is sufficient for success.

Davidson (94) taught reading to three groups of pre-school children... a bright three-year-old, a normal four-year-old, and a dull five-year-old group... all having Stanford-Binet mental ages of approximately four years. At the close of the experiment the bright three-year-old children recognized on the average 129.4 words out of context, the average four-year-olds 55.3 words, and the dull five-year-olds 40.0 words.

Keister (80) found that children under six may acquire reading skills sufficient to carry them on through first grade at a normal rate; but he also found that skills developed in such children tended to lack permanence and to disappear during the summer months between first and second grades.

The above investigations were not cited for the purpose of encouraging the teaching of reading to four and five-year-old children. There are many other important types of development to be promoted at these levels, and we have certainly learned from past experience that we are farther along in the long-run if we postpone reading till a time when the child can work with reading symbols easily, happily and understandingly. The chief value to be gleaned from the above studies is that from them we can generalize that no one mental age can be named as *the* mental age at which all children are ready to undertake reading.

Leaving the period of beginning reading, one experiment will be cited as illustrative of similar investigations which have made use of normal children in higher levels of the elementary school. Thomas examined 2,918 sixth grade pupils and found a close correspondence between those falling more than a year below the reading achievement median and expectancy in terms of mental age. Nevertheless, 13.4 percent were reading below expectancy in terms of mental age. Thomas drew the conclusion that whereas mental ability is the chief factor that determines reading achievement others are involved such as physical handicaps, illness, dominance pattern and poor instruction.

Some very revealing studies have been made in regard to the intelligence of reading disability cases, who in the larger sense of the term are also "reading readiness cases" at more advanced levels.

Monroe (50) found a range of I. Q.'s from 60 to 150 in a group of special reading cases. Preston (53) found a distribution of I. Q.'s

ranging from 90 to 140 in 100 cases of reading disability. Data from a study by Witty and Kopel (70) revealed that 90 percent of poor readers of both elementary and secondary ages, had I.Q.'s from 80 to 110, with about equal numbers between 80 and 90, 90 and 100, 100 and 110.

What are the important implications of these studies for the classroom teacher?

First, if she is a teacher of beginning reading she will not place her sole and undivided confidence in the six-to-six-and-a-half-mental-age criterion as determining when all of her pupils are ready to begin reading. While this is the norm which has been found in several different places, there are individual differences in children, in material used for beginning reading, and in the type of procedures used. Furthermore the other elements contributing to total maturation must be considered.

Perhaps we can best make the point by quoting from Smith and Jensen (88):

Lack of harmonious development makes the reading readiness problem even more complicated. If it is finally determined that reading should begin when the child has a mental age of six years and six months, the maturation of the other factors must then be given consideration. It may be quite possible that a child's vision or muscular co-ordination is not matured to the extent that the child is ready to take on this refined, taxing work of reading. In fact, there are a number of considerations that probably are quite as important as mental age. Such factors as general and special abilities and the problems of general achievement should be recognized as of fundamental significance. The use of but a single index of reading readiness ignores the fact that the *whole child* goes to school and that such factors as wants, interests, and attitudes which have biological foundations are fully as important in determining reading readiness as the traditionally used indexes.

Teachers of pupils above the first grade may find some valuable implications in these studies, also. It has been observed that many children who have I.Q.'s that are average or

above average are not making the progress in reading which they should in terms of their mental age. These children, then, must lack readiness in some other factor or factors which contribute to reading success. Try to find out what these other factors are, and remove their cause. Provide material and instruction in keeping with the child's present achievement level, but aimed at continuous improvement as the hindering factors are removed or corrected.

Emotional Readiness

Educators are increasingly recognizing the need for more attention to emotional maturity. In the wealth of literature which points to the necessity for developing the emotional responses of the child as a part of his total growth, one frequently finds significant statements in regard to the relationship between emotions and learning to read. Prescott (103) for example, says:

To engage successfully in reading, the child must learn to work cooperatively with other children, to follow directions, and to listen to group conversation as well as to participate in it. He must be able to attend rather closely for varying periods of time to the instructional activity. He should be persistent, resourceful and courageous in meeting new or difficult problems, and it is important that he engage in learning situations not with fear or anxiety but with self-confidence and a feeling of security The child who is socially or emotionally immature must be given time and opportunity in the first grade to grow in these areas before he is confronted with predominantly abstract intellectual problems.

Several investigations have been conducted which have a direct bearing on reading readiness, in its the larger concept, and emotions.

First, let's consider parental and home influences.

In a study of 30 children of normal intelligence but with reading difficulties, Misseldine (101) found that a third of the children had over-hostile mothers, four suffered from "acute

sibling jealousy reaction," two others were "indulged, then neglected or rejected as they reached school age," and two were "over-indulged." Practically all of the children tested were "insecure," "restless" and "emotionally ill."

Tulchin (108) found that parental nagging of the non-reader led to tension and nervousness which obviously inhibited the learning process. He concluded further that "The child's experience during the first few reading lessons may be so charged emotionally as to color all his subsequent reactions and determine his resistance to reading."

Blanchard (96) traces reading disabilities to a fear of the mother's attitude, and to jealousy over a younger sibling.

Saunders (105) reported that the children who did not learn to read were not aggressive, that they developed behavior problems, and that they were emotionally dependent upon their parents.

Brenner (27) reported that "Emotional instability resulting from physical causes as visual defects, lack of hand and eye dominance, or home conditions interfered with reading success. When the cause was removed behavior and reading improved."

Bird (95) used 100 children between the ages of four and six years as the subject of a study in which he found that 30 had personality handicaps which interfered with their learning.

Kinberg (100) drew this implication from her study:

Consideration of his [the pupil's] reading difficulty cannot be made apart from his personality adjustment and his attitudes toward reading experience. Helping to build emotional security may be essential in stimulating greater participation and better achievements.

Monroe and Backus (51) reported the following emotional factors as important causes of reading disability: general emotional immaturity, excessive timidity, predilection against

reading, and predilection against all school activities.

Many other studies (94, 97, 99, 102, 104, 107, 110) dealing with children at different levels who were having difficulty in learning to read, have revealed that reading disability is frequently associated with emotional instability.

Several of these investigators (72, 98, 106) have found that personality maladjustments tend to decrease or disappear as reading success occurs.

What are the implications of these studies for classroom teachers and what can they do about emotional problems? In examining studies in this area one gathers that: first, many of the emotional maladjustments that school children have spring from the home; second, the period in which children are first adjusting to school life is a crucial time in the development of emotions; there is a high incidence of emotional maladjustment in children who have trouble in learning to read; there is evidence that many children who have overcome their reading difficulties have improved emotionally.

One of the first constructive steps which a teacher can take toward promoting better emotional growth in her pupils is to have conferences with their parents and enlist their cooperation in removing pressures, jealousies, fears, and worries which may have their origin in the home. She should also look for possible physical causes of emotional maladjustment.

In the classroom the teacher should ever keep herself alert for possibilities of placing emotionally disturbed children in situations in which they may have opportunities to direct distorted emotions through more desirable channels, and she will give them the necessary guidance in doing this.

In the case of a child who lacks confidence she will so organize school activities that the child will have a chance to succeed in many situations, she will recognize his success even

in the simplest situations; she will avoid placing the child in situations in which his weaknesses will become strongly obvious because of comparison with more competent children; and she will make success in reading possible by providing very easy material.

In the case of a child who is overly aggressive, the teacher may challenge his ability by providing more difficult material and assignments, and encouraging the child to choose more difficult tasks in classroom activities. She will place him on committees with children of equal or superior ability; she will withhold praise; in the upper grades, she might encourage such a child to keep objective records of his achievements so that he can see that it is possible for him to do better.

If a child is fearful, timid, nervous or worried the teacher should try to find out the cause and remove it. She may invite the child to confide in her, to tell her how he feels about things that disturb him; she will take an objective attitude toward his emotional disturbances instead of being annoyed by them; she will enlist the child's cooperation in overcoming his difficulty; she will promote friendly relations between the child and other children and between the child and herself, but at all times she will give him firm and patient guidance.

Withal, the teacher will give all of these emotionally disturbed children control over the reading process as quickly, happily, and efficiently as possible, for it may be that the inability to read is the cause of some of their maladjustments.

Van Buskirk (109) sums up very concisely the possibility of the school's contribution to the development of emotional stability when she says:

Education can play a positive role in the formation of emotional stability. In the first place, the child in school becomes a part of a social group which sets a certain pattern of behavior to which he must conform if he is to

feel satisfaction. It is quite possible for education to preserve the positive, dynamic values in emotional expression, at the same time observing conformities.

Social Readiness

Social readiness and emotional readiness are so closely intertwined that it is difficult to separate them in any clear-cut way. A child's social behavior is really an expression or repression of his emotions in situations in which there is interaction with other personalities. For this reason no attempt will be made to preclude emotions in this discussion of social readiness.

Two types of studies will be considered under this heading; (1) those which have to do with the social status of the family in relation to reading; and, (2) those which have to do with the social characteristics of children, themselves.

Numerous studies have been made in regard to the relationship between the social status of the family and reading. A sampling of these studies will be presented.

In the area of readiness for beginning reading, Stallings (124) found that, "Parent's education, occupational level, and economic condition are factors bearing in direct proportion on scores made on readiness tests in this study."

Hattrick and Stowell (117) revealed in their report that the work habits and social adjustments of children who came from well-adjusted homes were consistently better than those of children who had been pushed or babied.

Brown (115) found that in certain racial and economic groups which he measured, the higher the social level of the child, the greater seemed to be the probability for his emotional stability.

On the other hand we have studies which show that there is not a close relationship between the socio-economic status of the home

and reading or emotional stability as it contributes to reading.

Ladd (119), who studied children in the third, fourth, and fifth grades, found that relationship between the socio-economic rating of the family as rated on the Sims Socio-Economic Score Card, and reading was not very significant. Bennett (113) concluded as a result of his study that "there is no clear evidence that the occupational adjustment of the family was a significant factor in producing the poor readers." Bennett also concluded that the educational status of parents of reading-problem children was not a significant determinant to children's reading progress.

The higher type of homes might even be a detriment to the amount of reading done in some cases. Russell (116) reports a study by Reed in which it was found "that a few rather extrovert well-adjusted children from high socio-economic levels don't read much because they have so many other experiences and interests."

From these studies and other similar ones it seems that while there is a close relationship between the socio-economic level of the home and readiness for beginning reading, that this relationship usually does not hold to any significant extent in regard to reading achievement in later grades.

Blatz, et. al. (114) conclude that adjustment to social situations is learned with age and that the child of seven or eight will have become fairly well adjusted to social demands. This may account for the lack of conclusive evidence of a relationship between reading achievement and social factors beyond the readiness period.

To pass on to a consideration of investigations which have to do with social characteristics of the children, themselves, a study conducted by Marston (120) is of interest.

Marston investigated young children in regard to those traits which as he points out

largely determine the individual's adjustment to his surroundings: social resistance, compliance, interest and self-assertion. He concluded that long before school entrance, children of two and three years already have developed characteristic attitudes of introversion and extroversion. The results of the study indicate a decrease in extroversion with increase in chronological age. Marston drew the general implication from his study that many pronounced tendencies which might later cause maladjustment of children in their social life are modifiable and subject to training in their early years.

This conclusion was re-affirmed by Rice (123) who said that the findings of her study indicated that children with a C.A. of 5-6 to 6-0 years are more susceptible to training in social adjustment than older children, from 6-0 to 7-6 years.

The effectiveness of the nursery school and kindergarten in meeting the situation as pointed out above, has been the subject of much investigation. As samples of such studies, reference will be made to one conducted by Peterson (122) and one by Hook (118).

Peterson (122) measured two groups of children in regard to social maturity, one in which the children had attended nursery school and one in which they had not. The groups were similar in age, intelligence and socio-economic background. At the time the children were ready to enter kindergarten, he found that the pupils in the nursery school group were more aggressive, independent and sociable according to ratings made on the Berne scale. They were also more mature in social competence as measured by the Vineland scale.

Hook (118) tabulated and analyzed different types of experiences which children had in the kindergarten in terms of the contribution which they might make to reading readiness. Of 131 different types of kindergarten experiences analyzed, 69 or 53 percent were influen-

tial to the social development of the child. A larger number of the experiences fell within this category than in any other.

From these and other studies it would seem that pre-school experiences are being provided to develop social maturity at this crucial period in a child's life.

In so far as social adjustment and reading, itself, is concerned, a very recent study by Mitchell (121) yields interesting information. Mitchell stated that undoubtedly many teachers and parents are under the impression that children who spend a great deal of time in reading lack in sociability, so she attempted to determine the significance of wide reading as a factor in the social acceptability of sixth grade children. Her findings lead to the conclusion that extensive reading is a significant factor in children's social acceptability. She states that her study "gives no encouragement to the misconceptions caused by the fear of parents and some teachers such as (1) bright children should not read too much; (2) reading makes children antisocial;

Studies of retarded readers offer us some valuable clues for use in teaching developmental reading. As a result of his experience with readers of this type Betts (112) says:

. it is not uncommon for a child with an unanalyzed reading problem to withdraw from the reading situation by becoming a disciplinary problem or by "crawling into his shell." When these pupils see their contemporaries making normal progress, they sometimes conclude that they are "dumb." This type of reaction and rationalization does not produce adequate social adjustment.

A few studies will be mentioned which support this contention.

As a result of his study of reading disability cases, Kniberg (100) concluded that:

The bulk of experimental material reflects the personalities of Retarded Readers to be less able than Successful Readers to cope

with intellectual (in this case reading specifically) and social situations that confront them.

Saunders (105) discovered among other things, that:

Children who did not learn to read were not aggressive; they played alone and avoided social contacts until they were considered anti-social.

Fernald (116) made a study of 78 cases of extreme reading disability. She found that in all cases, except four, these children had no history of emotional instability before they entered school. In all cases, other than these four, teachers and parents stated that the child had begun "his school life joyfully, eager to learn to read and write, and that the emotional upset occurred only as the child's desire was thwarted by his inability to learn as other children did."

Then Fernald goes on to discuss the social implications of these failures in reading. She says:

So the child comes to hate or fear books, papers, pencils, and everything connected with the schoolroom. The mere mention of reading and writing will often send him into a paroxysm of fear or rage, or arouse a sullen, negative response. Since school is the first group experience for most children, these negative emotions become connected through conditioning with the group, with the members that make it up, and with group activities. So we find the child either tending to withdraw more and more from the group and assuming a fearful antagonistic attitude toward it, or compensating for his failure by bullying or showing off. Our original case reports are full of descriptions of the "solitary child" and the "bombastic child."

The studies above were selected from many studies of this type. Nearly all such studies have pointed to a close relationship between reading disability and social maladjustment.

These studies have several practical applications for classroom teachers.

One implication which is quite clear is that the period in which the child first enters school is a crucial one in developing social behavior,

and that kindergarten and first grade teachers should be particularly alert to opportunities for redirecting tendencies toward anti-social behavior at this time.

Another implication to be gleaned from these studies is the need to provide rich background environment and cultural influences in school for young children who come from homes of low socio-economic level. If children from the better homes are ready for reading sooner than those from meager background homes, then attempting to make up this lack in school would seem to be one way of building readiness for beginning reading.

While there is not conclusive data to the effect that a similar relationship exists between homes of low social-economic status and reading achievement in the more advanced grades of the elementary school, we do find evidence of a relationship between social maladjustment in the child himself and retardation in reading. For this reason, from the reading standpoint as well as from the standpoint of total personal development, promoting growth in social maturity is important at all grade levels.

The social organization of groups and the give-and-take, free-discussion, co-operative types of activities which one finds in modern elementary classrooms are of course excellent ways of providing for social development. There are, however, certain individuals, who, even under the best classroom conditions, need special help; children who have social maladjustments of the types so frequently found in retarded readers, are of particular interest in this discussion. There is for instance the child who is ill at ease when mingling with others. For such a child the teacher should provide *many* contacts with children of the pupil's own age, older children, younger children, adults. . . all in situations in which there are opportunities for interactions.

If the child is lacking in cooperation with

others, and in responsibility for contributing to group interests and needs, then the teacher should frequently plan activities that can be shared in small groups, and place such a child in a group in which he is capable of making a contribution. She should have frequent discussion periods in which planning is done. If the child offers no suggestions, ask him what contribution he has to make. Show need of reading as a source of contributions, and encourage the child to make use of reading in order that he may participate more fully in group activities. Accept small contributions at first, and commend the child for any attempts at all toward increased participation.

If the anti-social behavior seems to be taking place because the child is beginning to "slip" in reading, or has already become retarded in this skill, then helping him to read better is the first consideration. In such cases every effort should be made to find out the cause of the child's reading difficulties and to provide him with appropriate instruction. During the period in which this is being done the teacher should establish an understanding and sympathetic rapport with the child rather than being impatient with him. She should attempt to provide him with a sense of security by accepting him as an interesting personality as a whole, even though he can't read well, at the same time helping him to catch up with his handicap as rapidly as possible.

In all daily reading activities the slower children should be respected from the social adjustment standpoint. When group games are played for practice purposes, opportunities should be provided the slower readers to make successful responses to simpler elements or processes than those presented to the better readers. It is very important also that the reading material used with the slower reading groups should be sufficiently easy so that they can understand the content, discuss it, and enjoy it together.

Experiential Readiness

A few investigations have been conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of first hand environmental experiences on readiness for beginning reading and on reading achievement. Others have been made in the area of reading itself. These studies have been directed toward the problem of ascertaining the value of providing experiences which make use of certain aspects of the reading process. A few sample experiments in each of these classifications will be discussed.

First-Hand Environmental Experiences.

Reading is essentially a process of gleaning meanings from printed symbols. The meanings, however, are not vested in the symbols, themselves; rather do these meanings spring from the mind of the reader who bring meaningful concepts to the symbols in terms of his own experience. Symbols are but empty shells. It takes experience to fill them with the meat of meaning. This being the case, one might expect that the reading process would be facilitated by building up a rich fund of meanings through first hand experiences, a reserve stock of concepts which could be drawn upon whenever the occasion demands in interpreting reading symbols.

The above hypothesis is probably the one which has prompted a few investigators to attempt to measure the relationship between experience and reading success. We need to have many more studies in this area. A few of the most pertinent ones which have been made will be reported.

Cantor (127) conducted a very interesting study to ascertain the value of excursions to kindergarten children as a means of preparing them for first grade reading. During the course of her investigation she used four methods of checking: (1) a critical summary of excursions taken according to previously established criteria; (2) an analysis of the concept-

building characteristics of the excursions with relation to a standard vocabulary; (3) a comparison of the topical and vocabulary demands of primary readers with kindergarten preparation; (4) a check during the first year of primary work done by children who had had this excursion experience in their kindergarten year.

This investigator found that two hundred and four concepts were given background in experience through nine excursions taken, and that a correlation had been effected between the vocabulary and concept demands of primary reading, and the vocabulary and concept supply of nine typical kindergarten excursions. The children who had taken these excursions in kindergarten were also checked for reading readiness and reading achievement in first grade. Cantor's conclusion in regard to the effect of the excursions on learning to read are:

From results of scientific tests administered in the primary year and the comparisons made with reading readiness in other schools, it seems probable that the children (who had the excursions) definitely profited from the comprehensive program of kindergarten excursions excursions experienced in their kindergarten year.

Hilliard and Troxell (131) conducted an investigation to ascertain the relationship between rich or meager background and success in reading. They used as their subjects seventy kindergarten children whom they followed through to the second grade in checking reading progress. At the beginning of the experiment they gathered from the kindergarten teacher, the principal, the school nurse, and other sources all information possible concerning the child's pre-school and present environment and background. The children's I. Q.'s were then determined and the total group was divided into two groups, one composed of children with meager backgrounds, the other composed of those having rich backgrounds. The rich-background group had slightly higher mental ages, but the difference was not statistically significant. Reading tests were given to both groups

at the end of six months in first grade and again at the end of four months in second grade. As a result it was found that the rich-background group was two months ahead of the meager-background group at the time of the initial testing, and six months ahead of the meager-background group at the time of the second testing. The rich-background group was five months ahead of the grade norm for the tests on the second testing and the meager-background group was one month below the norm at this time.

The authors drew this conclusion:

Other factors being equal, this study shows that children with rich backgrounds are more strongly equipped to attack the printed page than are the pupils of meager backgrounds because of enriched meanings and thought which the former bring to this task.

McWhorter (133) attempted to discover whether children's first-hand experiences influenced to any significant extent their growth in reading. She used as her subjects children in grades 1 through 4 in a county children's home "whose whole world had been enclosed with in the walls of poverty." These children according to McWhorter had very meager backgrounds. They were given reading tests at the beginning and at the end of a six-week period during which time they were provided with a heavy program of enriched experiences which motivated much of their reading. At the end of the period test results revealed the following gains: first grade gained .25 of a grade ($\frac{1}{4}$ year); second grade gained .26 of a grade (over $\frac{1}{4}$ year); third grade gained .75 of a grade ($\frac{3}{4}$ of a year); and fourth grade gained .52 of a grade (over half a year).

McWhorter had no control group with which to compare gains but since all but three of the children were retarded in reading for their grade-age at the beginning of the experiment it would seem that these children must have made much greater progress than usual

during this six weeks' period. One doesn't know how much the enriched experiences in themselves contributed to these growths as the materials and methods used also could have been factors. Nevertheless, the combination seems to have been very effective. Of particular significance is the fact that this combination of factors appeared to be even more effective in second, third and fourth grades than in first grade.

McDowell (132) reports a study in which an "enriched curriculum" was provided to a group of 52 kindergarten children. These children came from Italian, Jewish, Mexican and American homes and were attending a school in which reading ability had been consistently inferior. The curriculum which was provided to them during the kindergarten year included modifications in equipment and supplies; provided for physical examinations and dental corrections; encouraged parent education; and "the daily program was enriched through science experiments, excursions, nature study, movies, literature and music."

McDowell concludes:

Since the results in this study show a significant growth in the experimental group, after they received kindergarten training in the enriched environment, since the experimental group's progress exceeded that of the previous kindergarten group, and since the Karnes group for the first time on record compared favorably in reading ability with that of the Longan group in the American school, it seems evident that the reading ability of these foreign children was improved through an enriched environment in the Karnes kindergarten.

As in McWhorter's study one has no way of telling how much of the gain was due to enrichment activities since other factors were also in operation in the modified curriculum. A large part of the school time, however, was given over to enrichment activities, so it would seem reasonable to assume that these enrichment experiences contributed something to the gains made by the children who participated in them.

Other investigators have conducted related studies. Harvin (129) and Behrens (22) found that providing background experiences was one of the effective ways of preparing for beginning reading. Stallings (125) in his study of urban and rural children drew as one of his conclusions "The child's pre-school experiences through association with other children, literary influences in the home and travel are factors bearing in direct proportion on the scores made by children studied in this experiment."

Hildreth (130) prepared and tried out "Information Tests of First Grade Children" with a class of forty-seven pupils. Her most significant conclusion was that: "The highest degree of success was found in those items most familiar to the child, most often repeated and heard and consequently most frequently over-learned."

Experimental evidence in regard to the relationship of experience to reading success is too meager for us to draw any decisive conclusions at this time. What data we do have, however, are favorable. Their implications to kindergarten and first-grade teachers in so far as reading is concerned are two fold: (1) analyze the early readers which children will use for vocabulary and concepts; (2) provide enriching experiences which will acquaint your pupils with this vocabulary orally, and which will equip them with necessary concepts ahead of the time that they will meet these particular words and concepts in reading text. Instead of keeping them on the same level of over-learned concepts, let's open new horizons to them!

To teachers of reading beyond the first grade we might say that if building concepts through experience is helpful to reading growth in the first grade it is reasonable to expect that the same principle would hold throughout the grades. One of the studies reported above indicates that this is the case, and that building experiential background was even more effective in the second, third and fourth grades than in

the first grade. In these and in more advanced grades one probably would be forced to use increasing numbers of vicarious experiences in building background for the ever-widening range of settings and topics which children meet in their reading. In addition to the direct use of first-hand experiences in building concepts for reading content, the teacher in these grades may use abundantly still pictures, slides, films, exhibits, diagrams, conversation; and she should not hesitate to impart vivid worthwhile information which she, herself, has gleaned through her own first hand contacts with interesting people, places and objects. It would be very stimulating and worthwhile if every teacher of reading would experiment either formally or informally in building concepts for the reading content which her pupils will use, and then check the results in some way in order to ascertain the value of her concept-building activities.

Reading Experiences. It would be inappropriate in this article to attempt to summarize investigations throughout the elementary school which have been concerned with different types of experiences in using the reading processes, themselves. There is a vast accumulation of literature in investigations having to do with procedures, practice exercises, and reading content as these different factors affect reading interest and achievement. Many of these studies have direct implications in regard to readiness for certain skills and material at different levels. In the interest of space these investigations cannot be reviewed. We will, however, discuss a few recent studies having to do with contacts which children have had with reading symbols preceding or during the early stages of beginning reading.

One of the most recent studies at this early level was conducted by Almy (126) who explored the possible relationships between success in beginning reading and reading experiences before first grade. We can do no better than to quote the results of this investigation as phrased by the author:

A significant, positive relationship exists between success in beginning reading and the child's responses to opportunities for reading prior to first grade. This is true despite the constraints in the criterion, the unreliability contributed by retrospective errors, and the narrow range of talent and ability in this group.

While experiences which are usually thought of as "reading," such as looking at books and magazines, or being read to, contribute to the positive relationship between reading success and responses to opportunities for reading, interests in words, letters, numbers, wherever they may be found, as on signs, cans, packages, and table games, are also important factors in the relationship.

In Murphy's experiment (134) at the beginning reading level she found that "a lack of auditory discrimination, that is, power to distinguish between similarities and differences in sound of words appears to be one cause of confusion in reading," and that "specific training in auditory discrimination improves reading ability."

Wilson (136) and others concluded that kindergarten and first-grade children who knew the most letter forms and sounds tended to be among the first to learn to read and to be the best readers and conversely, that the children who were ignorant of, or confused about, letter forms and sounds tended to be very definitely the poor readers.

Gates and Bond, (128) drew the conclusion that "a correlation between the amount of previous instruction in reading given at home or at kindergarten or elsewhere, and success in reading was slightly greater than the correlations of mental ages and reading readiness."

Harvin (129) computed correlations between activities used by teachers to develop reading readiness and reading results obtained. The correlations between eight types of activities and reading attainment were high enough to have statistical significance. Named in rank order "contact with symbols" appears first on the list of these activities.

Umstot (135) investigated the value resulting from having beginning first-grade children read experience charts or stories based on their own experiences. She concluded that:

The experimental group seemed to score highest on tests requiring the ability of associating words with pictures, interpreting the meaning of words and the ability to read simple thought units, like those found in the sentence and paragraph tests.

All of these studies point toward an advantage for children who have contacts with symbols and who have had opportunities to make some use of elements of the reading process as a preparation for initial reading in books. The practical implication is that we must make definite provision for opportunities offering possibilities of growth in *reading* as well as for growth in other areas. We should view reading as one component of the total pattern of child development. Reading is such an important component, however, that it can't be left to chance. Reading growth demands the best guidance which it is possible for us to offer. Such guidance will not emanate from the results of scientific studies alone. Our most complete guidance will be derived from the combined sources of modern psychology, philosophy and investigation. Each of these should be drawn upon in whatever proportion is necessary to promote the goal of continuous, uninterrupted growth in reading from the time the child first evinces interest in symbols on the grocery package, until as an adult pressed with a multitude of other demands, he stands ready to meet his reading needs with a minimum use of time and energy. There *is* such a thing as reading readiness at all levels!

Needed Research

1. There is need for more "longitudinal" research, that is, research that covers longer periods of time in checking the relationship between reading and physiological, intellectual, emotional, social and experiential maturity, respectively.

2. There is need for more research in finding effective ways and means by which the services of other specialists may be utilized in building total reading competency.

3. There is need for more "longitudinal" research in the field of reading, itself, to ascertain what growth levels to expect at successive stages of development in various aspects of such processes as word recognition, comprehension, interpretation and use of study skills.

4. There is need for more research to determine the kinds of experiences and the sequence of experiences which are most effective in developing the different reading skills at successive stages of growth.

5. There is need for more research to ascertain the best ways of building concepts for reading, and for measuring the effectiveness of concept-building on the child's capacity to understand what he reads.

6. There is a need for more research in regard to the effects of reading content on children.

7. There is need for research to find more effective ways of teaching children to read critically.

8. There is need for research in regard to the place of reading in our future civilization, and the kinds of reading skills which will be needed most in the types of reading which will be done in the new order of things.

9. There is need for more adequate tests to use in determining readiness for beginning reading. Such tests should be much broader in scope than the present first-grade reading readiness and intelligence tests.

10. There is need for more adequate instruments to use in measuring growth in the different aspects of reading, itself. We need tests that check a greater number and some of the more significant aspects of the reading process. As an example we might refer to the usual reading-interpretation tests which devote them-

selves largely to checking comprehension of paragraphs or passages of text. Perhaps test should also include sections which call for such responses as underlining parts that give unbiased information or "straight facts;" parts that show prejudices of the author or reflect his personal experience; parts that are designed to affect one's "feelings," etc.

11. There is need for more diagnostic tests covering the whole range of areas discussed in this paper. Such tests should be designed for the use of the classroom teacher so that she may administer them at the first symptoms of reading deficiency, locating causes and specific types of reading disabilities which are in need of attention. In many cases adequate diagnosis during early stages of reading deficiency may prevent severe retardation at a later period in the life of a child.

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Using Modern Channels of Communication: Magazines

JOHN J. DEBOER*

America may be said to be a nation of magazine readers. For every book reader in the United States there are at least two magazine readers. Americans read magazines for amusement, for information, and for inspiration. They turn to magazines for interpretation of the news, for sidelights on interesting characters, for humor, for advice on practical problems, for adventure and excitement, and for personal and religious guidance. Magazines supply readers with fiction, history, political analysis, child psychology, news of sports, hobbies, and scientific developments, suggestions for interior decoration, home building and maintenance, clothing, health care, choice of schools and vacation spots, as well as scores of other types of informational and recreational materials. They present these materials in the form of words, photographs, cartoons, charts and graphs, drawings, and other visual symbols. Magazine communication has become a highly developed art and is today one of the most interesting and effective reflectors of American life.

The 6,000 magazines published in the United States range from lowgrade Comic books, cheap pulp magazines, and lurid adventure magazines to such sophisticated journals as *The New Yorker*, quality magazines like *Harper's*, and learned periodicals like the *Journal of Genetic Psychology*. Within a given field of interest, they range from such an excellent popular magazine as *Science News Letter*, to the *Scientific American*, to the highly technical magazine *Science*. There is a magazine for every level of reading ability, interest, taste, and political opinion.

How well prepared is the American public to read magazines with intelligence and pleas-

ure? Generally speaking, the American school has been much more interested in books than in magazines as media of communication. As in so many other ways, the school has been slow to adjust itself to this development in American life. Clearly in the field of magazines the school has both a great opportunity and a great challenge.

Objectives for Magazine Study

The study of magazines in school should be guided by a number of clear objectives. Mere reading of magazines at home or in school cannot in itself result in the improvement of the quality of magazine reading by American youth. The following objectives are suggested as possible direction for educational efforts in this field:

1. The Expansion of Magazine Reading Interests.

One of the fundamental purposes of the secondary schools is to prepare young people for the constructive use of leisure time. The magazine offers a wide variety of opportunities to adolescents, not only for the pursuit of their present interests, but also for the development of many worthwhile new interests. Boys and girls whose tastes in magazines are limited to the pulps, adventure magazines, or one or two popular magazines can learn to enjoy many other per-

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iodicals which will open new fields of interest and activity to them. Hobbies, sports, athletics, fashions, public affairs, science and nature, humor, education and child care, occupations, worthwhile fiction, and many other areas of interest are represented by many magazines of which the typical child is unaware and which are usually not available at the commercial magazine stand. It is the responsibility of the school to make these available to him and to encourage him to explore them.

2. *The Improvement of Reading Tastes.*

We have frequently heard the complaint that public tastes in books, radio and television programs, photoplays, and magazines are deplorably low. No doubt this complaint is justified. But tastes, like other human characteristics, are in large part learned, and it is possible for the home, the church, the school, and other social institutions to do something about them. Teachers can, by creating a favorable environment and providing happy experiences with high grade magazines, substantially improve young people's tastes in magazine reading.

3. *The Development of Independent Judgment in Magazine Reading.*

In a democratic society, ultimate decisions about public policy must be made by the people. It is of the greatest importance, therefore, that the people have access to as many sources of information and opinion as possible, and that they learn to make up their own minds after careful examination of many points of view. When young people read magazines which reflect only one basic view respecting public policy, they are likely to be influenced by the particular person, persons, or agencies which publish the magazines. For this reason, high school youth should be introduced to many viewpoints in the magazine world. They should learn how to compare these viewpoints, to recognize the bias of the writers, and to make up their own minds independently.

Magazines and the School

In undertaking the task of teaching children to read, the school has traditionally placed its chief reliance upon the medium of books. Actually, newspapers and magazines are read much more widely and regularly than books (97). To help young people to live intelligently in a world of newspapers and magazines would seem to be a primary obligation of the school. Familiarity with and interest in a wide range of magazines, some knowledge of editorial policies and practices, the ability to make wise selection among magazines, and the development of powers of critical discrimination in the reading of magazine materials are among the more important objectives of instruction in this area.

The Magazine As a Mass Medium

A brief look at some magazine statistics will suffice to demonstrate the importance of magazines as a concern of the school. Approximately 6,000 magazines, with a total circulation of 240,000,000, are published in the United States (9). According to one estimate (64), the average American family spends \$7.42 per year for magazines. The Comic magazines alone account for a circulation of at least 40,000,000 (1). One publisher of a group of magazines reports an annual gross revenue of more than \$37,000,000 (22). A leading picture magazine published \$57,000,000 worth of advertising in nine months of the year 1947 (28).

These figures suggest the significance of the term "mass media" as applied to modern vehicles of communication. They also suggest a new problem in the development of democratic institutions. When a single voice can be heard at one time by 90,000,000 people via the radio, and a single magazine is read by an estimated 25,000,000 people, the question of who controls these opinion-forming agencies, and in whose interest, assumes enormous significance in a society in which ultimate decisions must be made by the people themselves. The question of control vitally affects also the na-

ture of the educational problem with respect to magazine reading.

Control of the Mass Media

Eleven publishers control roughly one-fourth of the total magazine circulation, with 17 magazines out of the total of 6,000. They are DeWitt Wallace (of *Reader's Digest*), Curtis Publishing Company, Crowell Publishing Company, Hearst Publications, Coronet-Esquire, Inc., J. Howard Pew, Time, Inc., Gardiner Cowles, Atlas Corporation, T. M. Meuller, and McCall, Inc. Five publishers—Curtis, Time, Crowell, Hearst, and McCall—with ten magazines, represent one-fifth of the total magazine circulation in the United States.

To what extent does this concentration of control tend to guide public opinion in specific directions? Do the publishers named represent a sufficient diversity of viewpoint to enable American readers to form independent opinions? Do these publishers, consciously or unconsciously, serve any special interests by means of their publication?

As the Hutchins Commission on a Free and Responsible Press recently pointed out, "The agencies of mass communications are big business" (23). It is inevitable—and legitimate—that the editorial policies of these periodicals should be influenced in varying degrees by the economic interests of the publishers. Nevertheless, if a majority of readers are dependent upon media which are under minority control and reflect a single editorial coloration, the school clearly has the obligation to broaden the base upon which the majority forms its opinions. Moreover, in view of the tremendous present circulation of such magazines as the *Reader's Digest*, *Life*, and *Time*, it is questionable whether the school, in requiring the reading of these magazines to the exclusion of others, is justified in contributing to the further extension of this circulation and in further limiting the range of opinion with which young people have contact. Exclusive subscriptions by classes to a single mass maga-

zine can perhaps be justifiably interpreted as unintentional propagandizing in behalf of a single viewpoint on human affairs.

Intellectual Independence And Magazine Study

A writer in a recent issue of the North Central Association *Quarterly* (113), recognizing the urgent need for magazine study in the schools, recommends that a semester's work in high schools be devoted to magazines and other mass media. There is evidence that schools are increasingly giving attention to this problem. However, such study will have relatively little value if it is confined to the purely mechanical aspects of magazine production. It should be based upon clearly defined objectives appropriate to the social situation. Independence of any one magazine or group of magazines in the formation of opinion on social, political, economic, and personal questions should certainly be one such objective. Such independence may be achieved not merely by the critical analysis of the large-circulation media, but by comparisons with the numerous excellent magazines of more limited circulation.

Elementary School Children's Interests in Magazines

What magazines are read by children and youth? A great many studies of magazine reading interests have been reported. The reading of magazines appears to be popular at all grade levels (123). At the early elementary level boys and girls tend to prefer the same magazines, while the differences in interests between boys and girls increase markedly in the upper grades 5-8 (13). At least one investigator found that magazines are read in larger quantity by boys than by girls, that boys show more interest in current events and show greater independence in their selection and reading of magazines (13). As one might expect, many investigators report that bright children read more and better magazines than the slow learners do (54, 26, 25, 61). Middlegrade children of limited reading ability

can become interested in such magazines as *Popular Science* and *Popular Mechanics* (50). There is a close correlation between socio-economic status and number and quality of magazines read (69).

What magazines are read by elementary school children? *Child Life* appears to be very popular in the elementary school, particularly in the early grades. *Boys' Life*, *American Boy*, *Open Road*, *Boy Scout*, *Calling All Girls*, *American Girl*, *Miss America*, *Playmate*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Popular Science*, *Youth's Companion*, *Jack and Jill*, *Children's Activities*, and *American Junior Red Cross News* are frequently mentioned in lists of popular magazines for elementary school children.

Older elementary school children exhibit interest in several adult magazines. *Life*, *Reader's Digest*, *National Geographic*, and *Collier's*, according to some studies, are widely read by seventh and eighth grade children. Huber and Chapelle (69), comparing the magazine reading of bright and dull children, found that the former preferred such periodicals as *Radio News*, *Scientific American*, and *American Magazine*, while the latter chose such titles as *Photoplay*, *Film Fun*, *True Story*, and *Argosy*.

The circulation figures of the children's magazines do not always conform to the judgments of librarians and teachers as to their relative quality. Although Witty reports (120) that children show a keen interest in such magazines as *My Weekly Reader*, *Current Events*, *Jack and Jill*, *Story Parade*, *Children's Activities*, and *Jr. Language and Arts*, not all of these attain the wide audiences enjoyed by many periodicals not so highly recommended. In a study directed by the writer, Amar recently secured the ratings of 50 leading children's magazines by representative librarians from all parts of the country (4). The librarians ranked the list in the order of their choices as to format, general literary quality, popularity with children, and the extent to which the magazines promote

democratic ideals. The magazines with the number of first choices are given in Table I.

High School and College Students' Interests in Magazines

At the junior and senior high school level, magazines continue to be popular with boys and girls. Brink estimates that high school youth read from two to three magazines regularly (18). Ells (35), and Byrne and Henman (20) report similar figures for junior college students, while Witty and Coomer (121) found that they read four magazines (other than comics) regularly, and that the average remained consistent from grade to grade. The students' rankings of the fifteen magazines read most frequently in the Witty-Coomer study are given in Table II. In general, the findings of this study with respect to the magazines preferred are confirmed by numerous other studies e.g., those of Donahue (29), Elden and Carpenter (37), and Leary (70). One study (92) reported that the average high school student spends 2.85 hours per week in reading magazines.

TABLE I
LIBRARIANS' RATINGS OF CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES¹

Magazine	First Choices
Story Parade	43
National Geographic	39
Popular Mechanics	33
American Girl	28
Child Life	27
Boys' Life	27
Popular Science Monthly	18
Nature	14
Junior Scholastic	14
Children's Activities	13
St. Nicholas	11
Jack and Jill	10
Jr. Natural History Magazine	9
Model Airplane News	8

¹From "Children's Magazines Today," by Wesley Francis Amar. *Elementary English Review* XX No. 7 (November, 1943), page 288.

My Weekly Reader	7
The Open Road for Boys	6
Current Events	6
Boy Life	5
Science News-Letter	4
Jr. American Red Cross News	3
Jr. American Red Cross Journal	3
Young America	2
Calling All Girls	2

TABLE II
RANKINGS GIVEN BY HIGH-SCHOOL
STUDENTS TO THE FIFTEEN MAGA-
ZINES, OTHER THAN COMICS, READ
MOST FREQUENTLY BY BOTH SEXES
(From Witty-Coomer)

Name of Magazine	Rank - Both Sexes
Reader's Digest	1.0
Life	2.0
Saturday Evening Post	3.0
Ladies' Home Journal	4.0
McCall's Magazine	5.0
Good Housekeeping	6.0
Collier's	7.0
National Geographic	8.0
Scholastic	9.0
Popular Science	10.0
Time	11.0
Popular Mechanics	12.0
American Magazine	13.0
Esquire	14.0
Look	15.5

Eells (35), in a study of the magazine reading interests of over 17,000 high school pupils found that the three magazines ranking highest were *Reader's Digest*, *Life*, and *American Magazine*. These three magazines, in addition to *Time* and *Collier's* were common to the lists of both boys' girls' preferences. Other magazines on the girls' list were chiefly women's magazines, while those on the boys' list showed greater variety.

In a recent careful study of high school

students in reading, motion pictures, and radio, Sterner (107) reported that the chief interests of high school pupils are adventure, humor, and love, and that the choice of medium is much less significant than the choice of theme. In Byrne and Henmon's study (20), women's monthly magazines appealed most to girl seniors in high school, while monthly and weekly fiction magazines and quality magazines were read by a substantial number of both boys and girls in the senior year of high school. Girls turn early to adult magazines, and by age 15 tend to be avid readers of women's magazines and fiction magazines, according to Walter (115).

As in the case of elementary school pupils, the quality of adults' magazine reading varies with reading ability (19). Punke (90) found that high school boys prefer the themes of adventure, sports, and mechanics, while girls like romance, society, and fashions. He also noted a sharp decline of interest on the part of boys in boys' magazines in the course of the ninth grade. According to this study, high schools should apparently continue to provide suitable boys' magazines for pupils in the first semester of the ninth year. Many studies emphasize the close relationship between young people's interests in magazines and the availability of certain magazines (98).

In a study of the sources of high school pupils' information on current affairs, Lemmers (72) found that 61 per cent of the pupils depended upon radio first for their knowledge of current events, 31 per cent depended upon newspapers first, and only 8 per cent depended primarily on the news weekly.

The interests of junior high school pupils in magazines are reported by Ashby (8), who made a survey of the reading habits of 530 boys and girls in the Dennis Junior High School, Richmond, Indiana. Ashby lists the following types of periodicals as favorites among the young people whom he interrogated:

TABLE III
FAVORITE MAGAZINES OF PUPILS IN
THE DENNIS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL,
RICHMOND, INDIANA

Boys

1. Newspapers
2. Comics
3. Popular Science
4. Boys' Life
5. Popular Mechanics
6. Open Road for Boys
7. Life
8. Collier's
9. America's Boy
10. Liberty

Girls

1. Newspapers
2. American Girl
3. Life
4. Comics
5. Look
6. Good Housekeeping
7. Collier's
8. American Magazine
9. Weekly News Review
10. Ladies Home Journal

*The Use of Magazines in
Elementary Schools*

The literature on the use of magazines in schools contains little evidence of systematic activity on the part of elementary schools in the field of magazine reading. Many elementary schools, however, provide copies of *Child Life*, *Junior Scholastic*, *Story Parade*, and other children's magazines in the school library. The Madison (Wisconsin) Public Schools have published an excellent pamphlet entitled, *Magazines for Elementary Schools* (78), containing a unit on magazines for second grade, another for the intermediate grades, and a third for the fifth grade. The pamphlet also lists, with evaluative annotations, 63 magazines recommended for children's use. The titles of the magazines are given in Table IV.

The units described in the Madison pamphlet suggest such activities as the following:

Raising questions by pupils:

- 1) What magazines are easy enough for us to read?
- 2) What stories are easy enough for us to read?
- 3) Where can we find the names of stories most quickly?
- 4) How do we know what the stories are about?
- 5) Can we find stories or pictures about the topic we are studying in school?
- 6) How much do we need to pay a year for a good magazine?
- 7) How can we interest mother and father in getting the magazine for us?

Bringing magazines of interest to school.

Looking for material on topics to be studied.

Looking for pictures to interest other children.

Exploring a magazine

- 1) Reading stories children think will be interesting.
- 2) Showing completion of activity after child has read and followed directions in the activity section of magazine.
- 3) Reading poems of interest to class.

Surveying material to be found in magazines.

Reading to find material for a given topic

Telling stories, reading stories, dramatizing stories

Discussing how to make objects of interest to child or group of children

Reading poems individually or in groups

Writing original poems and stories

Reading for fun
for a class magazine

Looking at pictures
 Enjoying poems and pictures
 Drawing and constructing for fun
 Finding pictures for group booklet
 Finding stories and poems of interest on topics being studied.
 Painting and making things
 Keeping a scrapbook
 Preparing a class magazine

Experimentation

Carrying through to completion of science experiments presented in magazine
 Sharing stories and poems written by the children
 Presenting a play or dramatization of story found in a magazine
 Making a class movie or frieze

Organizing and evaluating magazine unit

What part of the unit was of most use to us?
 What do we like about the work done by group?
 What conclusions have we made concerning the questions we wanted answered?
 Preparing a magazine display
 Hearing talk on magazines by school librarian
 Listening to talk by Uncle Ray on the publishing of a magazine
 Making a list of different interests to be found in magazines (Use Table of Contents)
 Browsing among magazines
 Looking at magazine pictures
 Talking about interesting stories and articles
 Classifying stories as to whether they are fiction or true accounts

Finding stories about people of other lands, other religions, of immigrants, etc. (Inter-cultural relations)

Preparing classification chart of magazines, using following headings:

- 1) Price (by month and year)
- 2) Frequency of issue
- 3) Size
- 4) Illustrations (many, few)
- 5) Advertisements (many, few, none)
- 6) Size of print (fine, medium, large)
- 7) Quality of paper (poor, fair, good, excellent)
- 8) Number of pages

Comparing current issue of a certain magazine with an old copy to note change

Listing magazines that are purely recreational

Listing magazines that are published primarily for informational purposes

Listing articles from magazines that are pertinent to units for grade

Listing ways in which children's magazines are similar to, or different from adult magazines

Listing magazines that further interest in any hobbies

Choosing a magazine, and giving following information:

- 1) Why you liked or disliked magazine
- 2) Whether it is too old or too young or "just right"
- 3) Whether it is worth the price
- 4) What feature in the magazine you enjoyed most
- 5) Whether girls or boys would enjoy the magazine most

- 6) Whether it is worth ordering for school or classroom library
- Finding out how much you would save by buying any particular magazine by the year, rather than by the month; in groups, rather than individually
- Comparing accounts of same article by different authors
- Writing poems or stories and sending to contributors' column
- Finding answers to specific questions
- Reporting to class on interesting article
- Having a "Magazine Hour," for presenting original poems, stories, or any other material developed during study of unit
- Visiting a printing shop to see types of machines
- Posting references to interesting magazine articles on the bulletin board
- Preparing a class magazine containing a variety of features
- Designing the cover, sectional headings, etc., for the magazine
- Preparing advertisements related to class interests

Evaluation

- 1. Devices
 - a. Observation by teacher
 - b. Checking of pupil's magazine-reading by
 - 1) Questionnaire
 - 2) Class discussion and reports
 - 3) Informal tests
 - 4) Conference with librarian

Evaluation questions

- a. Are pupils increasingly interested in reading better magazines?
- b. Do they show less interest in Comics?
- c. Have they improved in techniques for research reading?
- d. Do they show keener observation of material contained in magazines?
- e. Have they grown in creative expression?
- f. Do they find increased enjoyment in reading magazines?
- g. Do they show increased interest in hobbies?
- h. Are they actively interested in the magazines ordered for the school?
- i. Do they sometimes compare the worth of one magazine with another?

The objectives listed in the units stressed particularly the importance of developing powers of critical discrimination in the reading of magazines, widening the range of children's interests, and building a background of significant factual information.

That elementary schools can succeed in improving the magazine reading habits of children was indicated in a report by Norris (86), who compared the magazine reading of children in a platoon school and in a non-platoon school. She concluded that "the desire to become interested in a variety of magazines can be brought about with children in the early readers." Similar results were obtained by Erickson (38), who made numerous desirable magazines available to a group of sixth-grade children.

TABLE IV MAGAZINES RECOMMENDED FOR ELEMENTARY GRADES
(Curriculum Department, Madison Public Schools)

Name of Magazine	Age Level	Price	Issued
<i>Aviation</i>			
Flying	10 and up	\$3.00	Monthly
Model Airplane News	7 - 16	2.50	Monthly
Skyways	12 and up	3.00	Monthly

Handcraft

Children's Activities	5 - 12
Popular Mechanics	6 - 60
Popular Science Monthly	12 - 18

Local Interest

Badger History with Junior Badger History	10 - 16	1.50	Monthly
Crusader	12 and up	.50	Monthly
Junior Crusader	8 - 12	.50	Monthly
Wisconsin Bulletin of Conservation	12 and up	free	Monthly

Modern Problems

Building America	10 - 18	2.25	Monthly
National Humane Review	9 - 15	1.00	Monthly
Soil Conservation	12 and up	1.00	Monthly
Young Crusader	7 - 12	.50	Monthly

Nature, Science, and Health

American Forests	12 and up	5.00	Monthly
Arizona Highways	10 and up	3.00	Monthly
Audubon Magazine	11 and up	2.50	Bi-Monthly
Canadian Nature	9 - 15	1.25	Bi-Monthly
Earth and Sky	10 - 12	.75	Semi-Monthly
Highlights for Children	5 - 12	4.00	Monthly
Hygeia	12 and up	2.50	Monthly
Junior Natural History	10 - 14	1.50	Monthly
Nature Magazine	10 and up	4.00	Monthly
Science News Letter	12 - 18	5.50	Weekly

Special Interests

American Jr. Red Cross Journal	12 - 18	1.00	Monthly
American Jr. Red Cross News	7 - 14	\$0.50	Monthly
American Photography	12 and up	2.50	Monthly
Asia Calling	10 - 18	2.00	Monthly
Better Homes and Gardens	12 and up	2.50	Monthly
Horn Book	12 and up	3.00	Bi-Monthly
Inter-American	12 and up	3.00	Monthly
Jr. Language and Arts	5 - 14	5.00	Monthly
Junior Reviewers	4 - 16	2.75	Bi-Monthly
Plays	11 - 16	3.00	Monthly
Popular Photography	12 and up	4.00	Monthly
Radio and Television News	12 and up	4.00	Monthly
Stamps	13 and up	2.00	Monthly
True Comics	9 - 14	1.00	Monthly
United Nations World	12 and up	4.00	Monthly
U. S. Camera Magazine	12 and up	1.75	Monthly
Young Wings	7 - 16	.50	Monthly

Story Magazines

American Girl	12 - 16	2.00	Monthly
Boy's Life	12 - 18	2.50	Monthly
Child Life	Pre-School	3.00	Monthly
Children's Play Mate	4 - 12	2.00	Monthly
Collins Magazine	10 - 14	4.50	Monthly
Jack and Jill	6 - 12	2.50	Monthly
Open Road for Boys	12 - 15	2.00	Monthly
Story Parade	9 - 15	3.00	Monthly
Uncle Ray's Magazine	9 - 15	2.50	Monthly
Wee Wisdom	6 - 11	1.00	Monthly
World Youth	12 - 15	2.50	Monthly

Travel Magazines

Geographic School Bulletin	12 - 15	.50	Weekly
Latin American Junior Review	12 - 16	1.00	Monthly
National Geographic	10 and up	5.00	Monthly
Travel	12 and up	4.50	Monthly

Current Events

Current Events	10 to 15	1.20	Weekly
Junior Scholastic	12 - 15	.90	Weekly
My Weekly Reader	5 - 12	.80	Weekly
Newsweek	12 and up	6.50	Weekly
Pathfinder	12 and up	2.00	Semi-Monthly
World Topics Quarterly	12 and up	1.50	Quarterly
Young America	7 - 15	.60	Weekly

Magazines for Elementary Schools provides information also concerning addresses of the magazines listed, as well as amount of advertising and illustrations in each.

*The Use of Magazines in
Secondary Schools*

As early as 1935, Bessey (15) discovered a widespread interest among teachers of English in the use of magazines in school. Her committee reported that at that time there was no one magazine that was ideally suited to the classroom, and that the greatest stumbling-blocks to comprehension and pleasure in reading magazine literature were the difficult vocabulary which characterized many of the articles and the fact that frequently the subject matter was remote from the experience of

adolescents and frequently inappropriate in theme for class discussion.

If Miss Bessey's committee were to report today, it would probably modify its conclusions in certain particulars. Magazines like *Reader's Digest*, *Coronet*, *Scholastic*, and others have made great effort to adapt the vocabulary level of their articles to readers of average reading ability, and have supplied teaching aids designed to make the respective periodicals more useful to teachers. However, the committee's general conclusion that no one magazine is ideally suited to classroom use will continue to be valid so long as the element of editorial bias cannot be completely eliminated from the content of any mass publication.

An optimistic note was struck by La Brant

and Heller (66) in their report of a study, made in 1936, of the magazine reading interests of 215 pupils in grades VII - XII. Their findings revealed a breadth of interest at all levels and a healthy and growing interest in desirable magazines. They expressed the belief that the problem of teaching pupils to read good magazines lies in making these magazines available in quantity, in providing situations where they may be read profitably, and in allowing leisure for their use. The study provides encouraging evidence that pupils' levels of discrimination can be raised when the school makes efforts toward that end. A more recent study by Mallon (80), however, seems to indicate that "there appears to be little solid conviction among schools concerning the use of periodicals and their place in the school program." Mallon conducted a survey throughout the country to find out the amount spent for periodicals, the periodicals actually taken, and the names of the magazines bound. He found that "policies with reference to provision of periodicals are diverse in the extreme and in every measurable detail."

The National Council of Teachers of English Committee on Research (Dora V. Smith, chairman) confirmed in its report (84) in 1935 the failure of schools generally to give adequate attention to the development of standards for the reading of magazines and newspapers. Similar conclusions were reached by Smith (103) in her survey of English instruction in New York schools, in which she reported that a wide variety of magazines were read by more than half the pupils with little influence from the school or library.

Class Activities in Magazine Study

A number of articles published in the *English Journal* have described units in the study of magazines in high school classes. One teacher (39) followed the study of a short story anthology with an examination of stories in the pulp magazines. Pupils brought to class pulp

stories they liked to read and evaluated them according to standards set up in class and others set up by critics of the short story. Another teacher (31) used magazines for supplementary reading, requiring pupils to examine them for various types of literary selections. Carney (21) described in detail a unit in which the pupils in an English class made a survey of the reading habits of the community, while pupils in a social studies class studied the newspaper and magazine reading of the country as a whole and its probable effect upon national thinking. Comparisons were made between the two studies and the results presented in assembly and P. T. A. programs.

In a ninth grade class, a teacher (71) discovered that Comic books ranked first among the pupils' preferred magazines. She requested the class to select magazines for the classroom library, and in their attempt to secure the best values for the funds available, pupils read many magazines. The teacher asserts that as a result of this experience pupils read fewer pulp and comic magazines.

Another effort to develop critical judgments in magazine reading was reported by Glenn (47). Pupils were asked to list the magazines they had read or were familiar with. The class then discussed the relative merits of these magazines, care being taken at the outset not to brand any of them inferior. Gradually standards of judgement were formed which were finally placed in outline form on the blackboard. Each pupil then made a detailed report of at least one of the magazines, measuring it in the light of the standards established by the class. Similar units were reported by Ronney (94) and Mann (81).

Barnes (12), in an earlier experiment with high school pupils, found that through the critical study of magazines pupils' tastes were materially elevated.

Class activities designed to improve the capacity of boys and girls to read magazines with

discrimination are described in numerous other sources (3, 41, 93, 94, 95, 102, 106, 111, 126, 128). One class built a representative collection of magazines by borrowing and purchasing copies. After study of the magazines, such questions as the following were discussed:

If you could have just one magazine in your home, which one would you choose? Why?

How would you spend a budget of \$15 for magazines for a family of five for one year?

Which magazines are edited by women?

Which companies publish the greatest number of magazines?

If you were editing a magazine what would be your chief interests and duties?

What are the chief differences between the "slick" and the "pulp" magazines?

Another teacher encouraged students to bring magazines to class and provided opportunity for discussing the contents. He called upon the members of the class to consider the reputation of the author and the magazine as well as the publisher and the sponsor in evaluating the contents. A fourth year English class formed a club for the study of current periodicals. Two periods were spent in general reading. In the discussions that followed, the students' interests were classified under four or five major headings, from which each student chose one for special study. The students then formed groups and planned programs presenting the findings of their reading. Finally they wrote summaries of their findings, answering particularly the following questions:

1. What magazines I read and what types of articles they contain.
2. What magazines I like best and why I like them.
3. What I learned from the magazine club.
4. What I should like to have done in the club if we had had more time.

In another class the students selected a list of nine magazines for class subscription. The magazines were available to students for home reading but returned to school once a month for directed reading. Articles which students read were listed, with publication facts, in the students' individual reading records.

A weekly sequence of activities was based on magazine study in a large California junior high school. On Monday the students made a free selection of articles from a collection of magazines, keeping a record of author, title, publication facts, and subject. Tuesdays were devoted to the writing of letters to the teacher, to members of other English classes, to subscription agencies, to editors, to advertisers. Oral reports on the reading occupied the Wednesday meetings. Spelling and usage skills, based on oral and written work, were considered on Thursday. Fridays were devoted to free reading of books and to book talks.

Posters, articles recommending certain magazines, letters to editors of magazines, and original magazines written by the students are examples of other activities carried on by classes in English. Standards of selection of magazines and types of audiences to which the various periodicals are addressed are studied in a number of high school classes.

The Comic Magazines

The popularity of Comic magazines among both children and adults has been widely noted. In a study of 950 junior high school students, Nasser (83) found that the most widely read classification of magazines was the Comics group (22 per cent of all magazine reading). In his study, however, as in others (notably Ashby's (8), the reading of comic magazines appears to decline during the junior high school years. Yuill (127) reports the results of a circulation survey made in 1943 by the Market Research Corporation of America, which revealed that Comic book readers included an equal proportion of elementary and high school

graduates, and that college graduates accounted for only slightly less than one third of the total group. Commenting on some of the best-selling Comics—*Batman*, *Superman*, *Action*, *True*, *Calling All Girls*, *Captain Marvel*, *Captain Midnight*, *Famous Funnies*, and *Magic Comics*—she expresses the conviction that some of the comics are “growing up,” that they are presenting good stories, often illustrating current social problems and participating in campaigns in the public interest, with a medium the masses will accept. She finds in the comics an educational weapon which we should not be afraid to use.

Frank (42) points out that Comics are filling a need in children's lives unsatisfied by real life—for fantasy, adventure, and identification with heroes. She believes that most Comic books are not harmful, and that they may be used as ladders to other books and as keys to children's interests. She warns that over-indulgence in Comics may be symbolic of an unsatisfied need in a child's life.

Arbuthnot (6), after commenting upon the phenomenal sale of Comic magazines and the fact that “young America is reading the Comics and liking them,” declares there is probably little cause to worry about children and their Comic strips as long as they are also enjoying good books. Her judgment would seem to be confirmed by a study by Heisler (52), who compared pupils who read Comics to excess and those who did not indulge in such reading. Heisler considered mental age, educational achievement, socio-economic status, social adjustment, and personal adjustment in his comparisons. He found no significant differences between the two groups. He pointed out that if significant personality differences were ultimately discovered, it would still be necessary to determine whether maladjusted children preferred to read Comic books, or whether the Comic books caused the maladjustment.

Sperzel (108) failed to find any relation-

ship between the reading of Comic books and vocabulary growth. Her findings, which suggest that readers of Comic magazines do not suffer losses or achieve unusual gains in reading vocabulary seem to be confirmed by Thorndike (112), who analyzed the vocabulary of *Superman*, Nos. 9 and 10, *Batman*, No. 6, and *Detective Comics*, No. 53. He found that each contained about 1,000 words other than those falling in the commonest 1,000 of the Thorndike Word List. The reading difficulty of the material, as estimated by the Lorge formula, was at the fifth and sixth grade level. Because of the vocabulary range, Thorndike concluded that the Comics do provide a substantial amount of reading experience for upper grade and junior high school pupils.

The well-known fact that the legibility of reading material in the Comic magazines could be greatly improved is further confirmed by a study conducted by Luckiesh and Moss (75), in 1942.

Gesell and Ilg report that children's love for Comic books, beginning as early as age seven, is at its peak at ages eight and nine, and begins to wane after age nine (46). A seven year old, according to these writers, may enjoy a children's magazine which suggests activities which he can carry out (122). The eight year old will enjoy looking into adult magazines, and this interest will increase on to his ninth year (124).

Witty and Coomer, on the other hand, after a study of reading interests of 500 high school students, found that Comic *strips* attained high favor in the primary grades and continued to be very popular throughout the middle and upper grades. A slight decrease in interest in Comic *books* was noted at the junior high school level and a marked decrease in the four years of senior high school. Nevertheless, Comic books continued to hold high rank even in a high school rich in opportunities and motivation for wide reading...indeed, the authors of

the report estimate that they constitute one fourth of the total number of magazines read in high schools.

Witty and Moore (124) found that Negro children in the middle grades read, on the average, eight comic magazines regularly; four, often; and five, sometimes. These averages are distinctly higher than those found for white children in the middle grades. The writers believe that one step in the solution of the problem is the provision of good books which are rich in the elements of action, surprise, adventure, and excitement.

Witty, Smith, and Coomer (80), after studying the interests in Comic magazines on the part of 224 seventh and eighth grade children, concluded that reading the comics represents a general interest, which in grades IV to VIII is relatively uninfluenced by differences in age or grade, sex, or locality. They suggest that the solution is to be found, not in suppression, but in surrounding children with a variety of good literary sources which are rich in the elements of action, surprise, adventure, and excitement.

Of particular interest is the conclusion of Witty (81) after a study of 2500 pupils in grades IV to VI, that there is little difference in the amount and character of the general reading of those who read Comics extensively and those who seldom read them.

Members of the magazine committee of the Madison, Wis., schools evaluated a sampling of Comic magazines. After listing the advantages and disadvantages of the Comic magazines, they classified a number of them according to the nature of the contents. Their list follows:

Nature of Content in a Sampling of Comic Magazines

Informational

True Comics	Real Life Comics
Hop Harrigan	Picture Stories of the
Contact (Aviation)	Bible
Classic Comics	Calling All Girls

Entertaining

Bugs Bunny	Little Acorns
Magic Comics	Tip-Top
Ha Ha Comics	Henry
Jack in the Box	Walt Disney Comics
Tick Tock Tales	Coo Coo Comics
Fairy Tale Parade	Uncle Remus and his
Our Gang	Tales of Br'er Rabbit
Ribtickler	Popeye
Buzzy	Raggedy Ann and Andy
Oswald the Rabbit	Krazy Komiks
Funny Stuff	Santa Claus Funnies
Izzy and Dizzy	Looney Tunes
A Ride to Animal	Terry Toons
Town	Felix, the Cat
Dagwood	New Funnies
Mickey Mouse	Happy Comics
Jiggs	Animal Comics
Bringing Up Father	Goofy Comics

Super-Thrilling

Whiz-Comics	Captain Marvel
Terry and the Pirates	Slam Bang
Captain Midnight	Sky Man
Superman	Flash
The Green Hornet	Tom Mix
Dick Tracy	Rodeo Ryan
Jack Armstrong	Buster Brown Comic
The Lone Ranger	Book
Sky King	Andy Panda
Prize Comics	Red Ryder
Action Comics	Kerry Drake

Undesirable

Nyoka — The Jungle	Red Dragon
Girl Blue Bolt	Dare Devil
Land of the Lost	Bat Man
Suzie	Wonder Comics
Famous Crimes	Buck Rogers
Fight Comics	Outlaws
Sensation Comics	

Following the principle advanced by Witty and others, the Children's Books Committee of

¹Magazine Committee of the Madison Public Schools, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

the Madison (Wis.) Public Schools published a 1948-9 booklist entitled *Fun for All and All for Fun: Books for "Comics Fans."* The list is annotated and classified by age groups.

The studies that have been reported in general indicate that Comic books do not retard growth in reading ability or contribute to personality maladjustment, and that there is little difference in the amount and character of the general reading done by those who read Comics extensively and those who do not read them at all. These studies do not, however, reveal what effect the stereotypes and assumptions present in the narratives of the Comics magazines, have upon the attitudes of children. It would seem to be desirable not only to supply children and young people with excellent reading materials capable of competing with the Comics, but to make the Comics the subject of critical analysis and evaluation in class particularly from the point of view of their characterizations of human beings.

The fact that such critical analysis can be carried on successfully in the intermediate grades is suggested by Denecke (82), who conducted a discussion of Comics magazines with her fifth grade class. Children brought their Comic magazines to class and classified them as "good" and "bad." They exchanged the "good" magazines, using them as material for oral reports. Brief programs were presented to other grades and copies of the magazines exhibited. By these means a demand for better Comic magazines was created.

General Conclusions

1. The mass circulation magazines are increasingly controlled by a limited number of publishing interests, and should therefore be abundantly supplemented by limited circulation magazines, in order that boys and girls may become familiar with a variety of viewpoints on current affairs.

2. The reading of magazines is popular at all age levels.

3. Sex differences in reading interests in the field of magazines begin to appear at the intermediate grade level. Boys tend to show greater interest in current events, and apparently exercise greater independence in the selection and reading of magazines. At the high school level, *Reader's Digest*, *Life*, and *American Magazine* are preferred by both boys and girls, but girls show strong interest in women's magazines while boys tend to show greater variety in their tastes in magazines.

4. Bright children read more and better magazines than slow learners do.

5. Children of limited reading ability can be taught to become genuinely interested in magazines which are educationally acceptable.

6. While a growing number of children exhibit interest in such periodicals as *My Weekly Reader*, *Current Events*, *Jack and Jill*, *Story Parade*, *Children's Activities*, and *Jr. Language and Arts*, these magazines enjoy a much smaller circulation than those of others not so highly recommended.

7. Estimates as to the number of magazines read regularly by high school youth vary from two to four. The average weekly time devoted to magazine reading (other than comics) by high school students appears to exceed two hours.

8. Students are interested primarily in the themes of adventure, humor, and love, and the theme is of greater significance than the medium. . . radio, motion picture, or the printed page. Other themes of interest are mechanics in the case of boys, and society and fashions in the case of girls.

9. Young people's interests in magazines are determined in large part by the accessibility of magazines.

10. High school youngsters depend much more heavily upon the radio and newspaper than on the newsmagazine for their knowledge of current events.

11. Elementary schools generally make little effort to guide the magazine reading of boys and girls, although excellent children's magazines are found in many elementary school libraries. Some schools, such as the Madison Public Schools and Long Island City High School (under the direction of Dr. Joseph P. Mersand, chairman of the English Department), and numerous others, are conducting systematic instruction in the reading of magazines.

12. One of the obstacles to the development of keen reading interests in magazines is the difficulty of the vocabulary and the remoteness of the subject matter from the experience of children and youth.

13. No single magazine is suitable for exclusive use because of the editorial bias present in all magazines within the comprehension range of pupils.

14. When magazines are made available in quantity to children and youth, and when leisure is provided for their use, genuine interests in good magazines can be developed.

15. A variety of class activities have been successfully employed in improving the range and quality of young people's magazine reading.

16. Comic magazines are widely read by both children and adults.

17. Comic magazines vary widely in educational acceptability.

18. Comic magazines apparently have little effect upon behavior, personality development, or reading ability.

19. The reading of comic magazines tends to decline in the early high school years.

20. Good books and magazines can compete successfully with comic magazines when children and youth have easy access to a great variety of reading materials.

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National Council of Teachers of English

The 1949 annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English was held at Buffalo, New York, November 24-26, in the Hotel Statler.

On Monday, November 21, three days in advance of even the Board of Directors' meeting, committees of the Commission on the English Curriculum met to take stock and plan for the completion of their work. The Commission proper met on Tuesday morning and Wednesday afternoon, criticizing first drafts of portions of the overview which will constitute volume one of the Commission's report and also plans of the horizontal committees for the three specific volumes to follow which will deal respectively with elementary, secondary, and college levels. At this time it was decided that a fifth volume will be needed to discuss the preparation of teachers. Some of the committees worked almost continuously from Monday morning until Thursday evening.

The Executive Committee of 1949 met Tuesday afternoon and evening, Wednesday morning and evening, to wind up the business of the year and leave Council machinery in good order for the new administration.

The Board of Directors continued the plan of morning and afternoon sessions on Thanksgiving Day, but this time it did not thereby escape the necessity of a late night session after the Annual Dinner on Friday. Attendance at the three sessions ran from 100 to 120.

Much of the time of the Board was spent in discussion of the location of Council conventions to insure all Council members against discrimination by the convention hotels. The motivating force was an item in President Sheridan's report of the actions of the Executive Com-

mittee. It had decided that in view of the Minneapolis Resolution¹ passed in 1945 it could not accept an enthusiastic invitation from a city where the hotels would treat all members exactly alike in meeting and dining rooms but not in the assignment of lodgings. The first round wound up with reaffirmation, by vote of three or four to one, of the Minneapolis Resolution. Later a member declared that the real question was whether the Minneapolis Resolution had been correctly interpreted. After further debate, the Board voted that "any city be considered for the convention only if its first-class hotels open to all Council members are numerous enough to house us all adequately." Four motions aimed at further action concerning racial discrimination were made at the third session late Friday evening, but they were too complicated to be clearly explained here; only one, with a guarding amendment, was passed. son a life membership in recognition of his

When Harold A. Anderson had presented his terminal report as Director of Public Relations and indicated that this time he could not consider any reappointment, President Sheridan presented an Executive Committee rec-

¹WHEREAS, we the members of the Committee on Intercultural Relations believe that no individual should be denied his civil rights because of race or religion; and WHEREAS, we believe that no member of the National Council of Teachers of English should be denied any privileges of the Council because of race or religion; BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the National Council of Teachers of English request the Executive Committee to hold annual meetings of the Council only in those cities in which hotels, particularly the headquarters hotel, accord members of the Council rooms and dining room service regardless of race or religion.

ommendation that the Board vote Mr. Anderson devoted and effective service during the last seven years. Members of the Board first applauded and then rose spontaneously. This President Sheridan interpreted as acceptance of the recommendation. Later upon motion of Milton L. Zisowitz the Board voted to establish an annual award for service in the field of English to be known as the W. Wilbur Hatfield Award.

The Annual Business Meeting (all members of the Council) had been set for four o'clock Thanksgiving Day, so that the Board had to adjourn at that time. Most Directors did not leave their seats as the Board and its audience became the Annual Business Meeting. First it accepted a minor change in the constitutional provision for the Nominating Committee. Then it defeated a motion to accept the principle involved in a series of proposed amendments to the constitution which would have abolished the Annual Business Meeting and transferred its functions to the Board of Directors. There being no further business, the Annual Business Meeting adjourned and the Board was again called into session.

Officers for 1950 elected by the Board were those proposed by the Nominating Committee, whose report was published in the May issues of all the official organs of the Council: President, Mark Neville, John Burroughs School, St. Louis; First Vice-President, Paul Farmer, Henry W. Grady High School, Atlanta; Second Vice-President, Edna L. Sterling, Language Arts, Seattle Public Schools; Secretary-Treasurer, W. Wilbur Hatfield, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21. These officers, with Past Presidents Thomas C. Pollock and Marion C. Sheridan, and Section Chairmen Hannah M. Lindahl (Elementary), Hardy R. Finch (High School), and Margaret M. Bryant (College), constitute the Executive Committee for 1950.

Ten persons were nominated by informal ballot for the Nominating Committee to serve

in 1950, proposing by February 1 officers to be voted upon next Thanksgiving and to serve, if elected, in 1951. By a second ballot five of the ten were elected to serve on the committee: Luella B. Cook, chairman; Robert C. Pooley, C. C. Fries, Thomas C. Pollock, and Dora V. Smith.



Past president Thomas Clark Pollock spoke the following invocation at the Annual Luncheon of the National Council, Saturday, November 26, 1949:

Our Father, we thank Thee for bringing us once again to the time of our Annual Luncheon. We thank Thee for the bread we are about to break together. We thank Thee for our preservation and strength, as we remember those who are no longer with us.

We are of various families, and we approach Thy truth in various ways: We ask Thy blessing on all our work, and on the work of our Council. Guide and strengthen us and our officers. Guide and strengthen our country and our world. Hasten the day, we beseech Thee, when the members of this Council may meet and work together anywhere in peace and friendship.

O Lord of laughter and of love, of mercy and of truth, we thank Thee that we are permitted to be teachers, and we ask Thee to guide us as we guide others, and to help us grow in Knowledge and wisdom as we attempt to help others.

O Lord, strengthen those things which unite us, and weaken those things which divide. AMEN.



Miss Naomi Chase, Chairman of the Nominating Committee for the Elementary Section, presents the following slate for members of the Section Committee and representatives of the Section on the Board of Directors:

For Members of Section Committee
(Two to be elected)

Mildred A. Dawson, M. J. M. School,
Kingston, New York

(Continued on Page 137)

Look and Listen

Edited by LILLIAN NOVONTNY¹

Radio and Television

Reactions of 4,000 junior high school students to a screening of CBS-TV's "United Nations in Action" in November at the Fabian Fox Theatre in Brooklyn were relayed, via tape recordings, by Edward R. Murrow on his regular "Edward R. Murrow with the News" broadcast on CBS (CBS, 7:45-8:00 PM, EST, Monday through Friday).

Groups of pupils selected at random from the audience were interview by a special tape-recording team, Lee Bland, CBS Assistant Director of Special Events, and John Aaron. Their comments provided an interesting and educational cross-section of what goes on in the minds of school children on crucial questions of world peace.

Mr. Murrow introduced his recorded guests as follows:

"Their teachers told them they were watching history in the making. The students were not exactly fascinated. They booed Vishinsky and applauded the American delegates — a sort of cowboys and Indians reaction. They were bored by the long speeches, but seemed to think my old friend Larry Lesoeur, who was handling the telecast from the U. N., was wonderful. There he was with a microphone, wearing headphones, a big clock behind him — sort of a Buck Rogers character, if one can so characterize a distinguished diplomatic correspondent. We went right to the source for our reaction to this first experiment in mass education by television, and recorded for you the unrehearsed comments of some of the students."

He summed up the children's comments by saying:

"Of course, the U. N. is trying to chart a future course for all of us. The four thousand

students in that theatre in Brooklyn may not have gotten much out of today's experience, but I think we did. Those recorded voices you have heard reflect the eagerness of those 14-year-olds to learn, their awareness of the importance of what is happening, and their feeling that they are not being properly briefed on current events. The comments of these students were about as intelligent and penetrating as anything heard at Lake Success today. So far as the delegates to the U. N. are concerned, they now have it on the authority of the Brooklyn boy that those who, in his words, 'go to sleep already,' aren't going to impress anybody very much. And the educators who staged the experiment have presumably learned that television, like radio, is a supplementary medium in the field of education."

Films

Encyclopaedia Britannica Films (1150 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois), in their new 16 mm. sound motion picture, *Gas for Home and Industry*, has brought interestingly to life a subject that is too often just taken for granted. According to C. Scott Fletcher, president of the educational film producers, the film is the second in a series on World Energy resources, a subject of interest to adult audiences as well as the schools.

The collaborator was Wilbut L. Beauchamp, Ph. D., Associate Professor of Science Education, the University of Chicago, who is co-author of numerous science textbooks. Dr. Beauchamp has previously collaborated on four other EBF science films.

The new film is available for purchase or rental from Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois. Its purchase price is \$63. and

¹Miss Novotny is principal of the Oriole Park School, Chicago, and a member of the Council's Committee on Radio.

it may be rented at \$4.00 for from one to three days' use at any one of EBF's six rental libraries in Chicago, New York, Dallas, Pasadena, Boston, and Atlanta.

Filmstrips

Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41st Street, New York City 17, has announced the following releases:

Children of America, designed for use in elementary and junior high schools, provides background and enrichment for history classes, as well as for the language arts. Each of them is an original dramatic story of a boy or girl who lived during an important period of early American history, bringing in important personages and reflecting the life and customs of those times. Extreme care has been taken to make each filmstrip authentic in event and detail. The filmstrips are done in original artwork and are printed on Ansco color film. The titles which comprise Set No. 1 of this series are as follows: *An Indian Adventure* (45 frames), *Washington Invaded* (43 frames), *Silver Spurs in California* (48 frames), *Lost in Penn's Woods* (44 frames), *The Boston Tea Party* (44 frames), and *The Last Delegate* (45 frames). Twelve additional titles in this series will be released at an early date. The filmstrips can be purchased at \$30.00 per set of six titles.

Pictorial Events, Classroom Reels, 597 Fifth Avenue, New York City 17, offers an extensive listing of filmstrips, each reel costing \$2.50 with a Teacher's Guide. A descriptive catalog may be obtained upon request. A listing of titles follows:

American History Series

1. Christopher Columbus
2. The Pilgrims & Puritan Life
3. Early Dutch Settlement in New York
4. Northwest Passage
5. Allegheny Uprising
6. Pre-Revolutionary Days & Daniel Boone
7. Colonial Virginia

8. The Revolutionary Period & George Washington
9. Declaration of Independence
10. Drums Along the Mohawk
11. The Constitution of the United States
12. The Bill of Rights
13. The American Flag
14. Louisiana Purchase
15. Star Spangled Banner
16. Little Old New York
17. Old Ironsides
18. Andrew Jackson
19. The Monroe Doctrine
20. Independence & Annexation of Texas
21. Building America with Kit Carson
22. The Westward Migration
23. Building America with Brigham Young
24. The Grim Period of Slavery
25. Young Mr. Lincoln
26. Abe Lincoln in Illinois
27. Lincoln in the White House
28. Wells Fargo
29. General Custer
30. Western Union
31. The Iron Horse
32. Alexander Graham Bell
33. Young Tom Edison
34. Edison the Man
35. Woodrow Wilson (2 reels)
36. American Heroism (Sergeant York)
37. Our Government
- 37a. United States Coast Guard

World History

73. The Last Days of Pompeii
74. Mighty Rome in the Days of Caesar
75. Age of Feudalism
76. Victoria the Great
77. Czarist Russia and Russia Today
78. The Ten Commandments
79. Samson and Delilah
80. Juarez - History of Mexico
81. Henry the Eighth
82. A dispatch from Reuters —
- Story of Journalism*
83. Young Mr. Pitt

84. Lord Nelson
85. The Great Commandment

Science and Biography

100. The Magic Bullet
101. Emil Zola
102. Story of Louis Pasteur
103. The Great Franz Schubert
104. Radium and Madame Curie

Literature and Drama

38. David Copperfield
39. Disney's Fantasia
40. Ichabod - Washington Irving's
Legend of Sleepy Hollow
41. Mr. Toad - Kenneth Graham's
Wind in the Willows
42. Cinderella
43. Prisoner of Shark Island
44. Les Miserables
45. A Tale of Two Cities
46. Heidi
47. Little Lord Fauntleroy
48. Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
49. Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*
50. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*
51. Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
52. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*
53. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*
54. Scarlet Pimpernel
55. Uncle Tom's Cabin
56. The Last of the Mohicans
57. The Man in the Iron Mask
58. Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm
59. The Count of Monte Cristo
60. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*
61. Alice in Wonderland
62. Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde
63. Robin Hood
64. Charge of the Light Brigade
65. Treasure Island
66. The Mark of Zorro
67. Pinocchio
68. Adventures of Tom Sawyer
69. Gulliver's Travels

70. Thief of Bagdad
71. Kipling's *Jungle Book*
A Christmas Carol
72. *Scrooge* - Dickens'

Exploration and Geography

86. Adventures of Marco Polo
87. Stanley and Livingstone
88. The Story of Eskimos
89. Holland
90. Switzerland
91. Sweden Today
92. Life of Navajo Indians

Latin American Neighbors

93. Bolivia
94. Story of Chile
95. Ecuador
96. Panama
97. Mexico
98. Peru
99. Brazil - 3 reels

Recordings

Columbia Records Inc., has completed production of "I Can Hear It Now," Volume II, with the famed reporter Edward R. Murrow as narrator. This release covers the 1945-1949 period in world history and will be issued simultaneously on one long-playing microgroove record (ML 4261) and in an album of five conventional twelve-inch records (MM - 881).

Gloria Chandler Recordings, Inc., 422½ W. 46th Street, New York City 19, has announced the availability of the following recordings:

Songs for small people:

Sing Me to Sleep - Songs by Marty . . . 11 songs on 2 unbreakable 10-inch records . . . ages 2-8 Price \$3.25 tax and mailing included.

Stories for middle-sized people (ages 8-12 years):

Copper-toed Boots
Bayou Suzette
Captain Kidd's Cow
Trap-lines North

Forest Patrol
Homer Price
Mischievous in Fez
Strawberry Girl
On the Dark of the Moon
Gift of the Forest
Downright Dencey
Miss Hickory

Each of these book dramatizations is recorded at 78 r. p. m. on 2-12-inch vinylite records.

Price, \$5.00 a title plus postage.

Two Long-playing records for everybody's pleasure:

Piano interpretation and comment—Bach .
Grieg . Schumann

Moussorgsky—Price \$4.85

An hour of selections from *The Gospels* reverently recorded from the King James version.

Price \$4.85

Consumer Reports, November 1949, (38 East 1st Street New York 3) contains a selection and review of releases in children's recordings which should be helpful in making selections. See pages 531-533.

The Gramophone Shop, Inc., 18 East 48th Street, New York 17, New York in its *Record Supplement* for December, 1949, lists available recordings under the following headings: Poetry, Shakespeare, Drama, World Events, Children's Records. See pages 26-29.

According to the *FREC Service Bulletin*, the AER has issued in mimeograph form a *Catalog of Appraisals of Recordings for School Use*, which is a compilation of the appraisals which were made last year by the special AER Recordings Evaluation Committee and published as monthly features in the *AER Journal*. Patterned after the Catalog issued originally by the Evaluation of School Broadcasts Project at Ohio State University by J. Robert Miles, under the direction of Dr. I. Keith Tyler, the appraisals have been made by local committees of classroom teachers and their students. The

purpose is to supply teachers with detailed information concerning the availability of recorded materials as well as suggestions for their use based on the practical application of them by other teachers. Nearly one hundred recorded programs are included in the Catalog. AER members may obtain copies for 50 cents each. Non-members may purchase them through AER headquarters, 228 No. La Salle Street, Chicago, for \$1.00.

General

If you are interested in purchasing a new tape recorder, you will want to see the review of new equipment made by William J. Temple, Brooklyn College, and published in *Scholastic*, Teacher Edition, for November 1949, page 13-T. This includes desk or portable models selling under \$1,000 and those selling for more than \$1,000.

Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials, published by the Curriculum Laboratory, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville 4, Tennessee, 1948. 175 pp. 25c. Entries are classified by subject, and the sources from which they may be obtained are listed.

Index of Free Teaching Aids, Brose Phillips. Free Teaching Aids Company, 1101 S. Feazel Street, Harrisburg, Illinois, 1948. 145 pp. \$3.00. Entries are listed by subject with the address from which they may be obtained. Pictures, maps, pamphlets, exhibits, bulletins and films are included. Various subject fields and levels of instruction are listed.

Elementary Teachers' Guide to Free Curriculum Materials, Educators Progress Service, Randolph, Wisconsin. This volume includes a table of contents, giving the broad general outline of the guide, full information on each item by areas, teacher resource material, title index and source index. This guide is completely revised each year to keep abreast of the constant advances made in the quality and quantity of free education materials. Pp. 208. \$4.50.

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

The National Conference on Research in English will hold its 1950 annual convention at Atlantic City on February 26 and 28.

The first meeting of the Conference will be a breakfast on Sunday, February 26, in the Surf Room of the Ambassador Hotel, at 9 a. m. This meeting will last most of the morning. At that time, members of the Conference are invited to make brief reports on their most recent research. The annual business meeting will also be held then. It is hoped that at the same meeting future research bulletins can be planned. The price of this breakfast is \$1.25 (tip included).

The second meeting will be a luncheon on Tuesday, February 28, in the Venetian Room at the Ambassador Hotel. The price is \$2.75 (tip included). This meeting is open to anyone who wishes to attend. Substantial papers on research in English will be presented by leaders in our field.

Reservations should be made with the secretary, Dr. Gertrude Whipple, 467 W. Hancock, Detroit 1, Michigan. Tickets may be picked up at the ticket sales desk at the registration headquarters in the auditorium in Atlantic City. If hotel accommodations are desired, they may be secured by writing to: Housing Bureau, American Association of School Administrators, 16 Central Pier, Atlantic City, New Jersey.



Good books always make good gifts for children, Acting Security Administrator John L. Thurston said in announcing a new edition of *For the Children's Bookshelf, a Booklist for Parents*, published by the Children's Bureau.

"The perennial problem many parents, aunts, uncles, and friends have to face is the

selection of the right book to give Johnny or Mary," Mr. Thurston said. "This booklet will be especially helpful in making the right selection. Some 500 separate titles are listed under a variety of classifications, such as stories for boys at different ages, books on animals and nature, song books, picture books for the very young, books about people and places, and books for reading aloud."

"Good books can contribute in the development of a child. First of all, books are fun; they can extend the horizons of his imagination which is always satisfying. A child introduced to good books at an early age is likely to develop a real interest in reading, a great help later in school and something that will give him enjoyment throughout his life. When a child has developed an interest in reading he will find life more rewarding since he can find out in books the answers to so many questions that he is not apt to find elsewhere."

Copies of *For the Children's Bookshelf* may be purchased at 15 cents each from the Supt. of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.



The Fourteenth Children's Spring Book Festival will be celebrated the second week in May. The Festival, sponsored by the New York *Herald Tribune*, features a contest with cash awards to each of three books regarded as the best published during the spring season for boys and girls in three different age groups. The prizes are \$2.00 each. An additional twelve Honor Books will be selected.

Bookstores, libraries, and schools all over the country are asked to display books for chil-

¹Mr. Jenkins is a graduate assistant in Education at the University of Illinois.



dren during the week May 8-13. As a focal point for exhibits the *Herald Tribune* will supply four color posters such as this one by Barbara Cooney, to be distributed in May, without charge. Send request to Carolyn Coggins, New York Herald Tribune, Room 405, 230 West 41 Street, New York 18.

The Prize Winning and Honor Books will be revealed in the Sunday Book Review, May 7, along with reviews of the books.



The Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of February, 1950 are: For boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age: *Schoolhouse in the Woods*, by Rebecca Caudill. The John C. Winston Co., \$2.00; for boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite de Angeli. Doubleday & Company, \$2.50; for older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Turn in the Road*, by Marguerite Dickson. Thomas Nelson & Sons, \$2.50; for older boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *Hank of Lost Nugget*

Creek, by H. R. Langdale. E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., \$2.50.



The University of Oregon Instructional Materials Laboratory has announced the re-establishment of its Curriculum Bulletin series with the release of these five new numbers of interest to teachers of Language Arts:

No. 57 *Instructional Aids to Learning*. 47p. 50c (A list of bibliographies and sources of audio-visual aids as of July, 1949.)

58 *Free and Inexpensive Teaching Materials*. 22p. 25c (A list of 200 firms and agencies that distribute free and inexpensive educational materials of value in most subject areas.)

60 *Education for Paradise Valley*. 71p. 50c (An "ideal" plan for an educational program, prepared by a class of experienced teachers and administrators.)

61 *Curriculum Foundations for Paradise Valley*. 49p. 40c (An analysis of basic factors—sociological, philosophical and psychological—to be considered in planning a modern curriculum.)

62 *Curriculum Plan for Utopian Schools*. 53p. 45c (Another "ideal" plan with special emphasis on the curriculum and its organization.)

Some early numbers of the Curriculum Bulletin of interest to teachers of the Language Arts also are available. Inquiries should be directed to Instructional Materials Laboratory, School of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene.



The December issue of *Childhood Education* discusses "Using What We Know About Children in Teaching Reading." Topics include:

Do Children Learn to Read? When Will We Do As Well As We Know? How Do We Know When Children Are Ready to Read? Play Therapy—A Way of Understanding and Helping "Reading Problems"; Reading With Six-Year Olds; Shall Beginning Reading Be Delayed? and, A Scale for Evaluating Comic Books.



A New Annotated Reading Guide for Children with Partial Vision, a bibliography listing printed materials for the use of students having visual difficulties, has been compiled by Miss Lorraine Galisdorfer, a teacher of partially seeing children in the public schools of Kenmore, N. Y. Price, \$1.00. Copies may be secured from the compiler at the Charles Lindbergh School, Kenmore 17.



To puzzled, worried parents and teachers who feel that the old disciplinary methods don't work but who think that the modern way is "no discipline at all," Dr. Dorothy W. Baruch explains how we can fashion discipline to fit the child and suit ourselves, making it a creative undertaking instead of a mechanical thing. In the Public Affairs Pamphlet, *How to Discipline Your Children*, Dr. Baruch does not give specific remedies for specific problems but outlines some useful principles that hold good "whether a child is two or teen-age." The essential fact that every parent must know, the author states, is that "bad feelings cause bad actions."

"The best way to give a child of any age enough loving is really to love him." And really loving a child, Dr. Baruch explains, means having good feeling inside ourselves about him—means learning to know him as an individual, for the child needs most to count on our understanding his "bad" feelings as well as his good ones.

"Watching and listening and finding out

what he really is like" will also help us, the pamphlet points out, to give him the feeling that he is a capable individual, for it will prevent us from expecting accomplishments beyond his years and keep us from overloading him with countless requests.

How to Discipline Your Children, by Dorothy W. Baruch, is No. 154 in the series issued by the Public Affairs Committee, Inc., a nonprofit educational organization at 22 East 38 Street, New York 16.



Three articles of particular interest to elementary educators appear in the October, 1949 *Educational Leadership*: "The Child in Today's Culture," by John Gillin, discusses, from the view of the anthropologist, the role of the child in American society. Professor Gillin points out the societal complexities that the child faces in growing up and the demands which are placed on him. The need for research on our own culture and its various sub-cultures is carefully drawn.

Seven vital issues in curriculum revision are discussed by Henry J. Otto in his article "Curriculum Issues in Elementary education." These issues include: a reorganization which will consider educational needs in society today; a consideration of the purposes of education viewing them as directional goals and not prescriptions of minimum essentials; a realistic approach to individual differences which will meet the abilities, maturation levels and educational potential of the child in our schools; a re-thinking of the organization for instruction ("departmentalization stymies revision"); functionalizing the curriculum; and, the use of the school as a laboratory to develop social citizenship and character education.

Labelling the present elementary curriculum as "introverted," Dr. Roma Gans of Columbia, in "And Gladly Teach," writes that for too long the school has neglected the community, not

used its resources, and now truly we have "schooling." To help them carry out their responsibilities in meeting the needs of children teachers need the aid of specialists in the community—those in health, welfare, and medicine.



The Bill of Rights, and the Oath of Allegiance to the United States made by George Washington at Valley Forge in 1778 are among the famous documents of the American heritage which are now available for sale, in facsimile, to schools, libraries, and the public. A list of the documents, with prices, may be obtained from the Exhibits and Information Officer, National Archives Building, Washington 25.



Stating that "protection against subversive influences can best be achieved by . . . vigorous teaching rather than by negative methods or repressive censorship," the Board of Education of Scarsdale, N. Y. recently turned down a proposal to allow a self-appointed censorship committee to function in connection with the school library and textbooks. In its statement the Board urged that Scarsdale's young people be encouraged to think and judge for themselves.



A letter to the NEA *Journal* from eighth-grader Shirley Dyer of Alabama City, Ala., who wants to be a teacher, asking for information about the profession, reminds us that many teachers may be "put on the spot" by admiring youngsters in their classes. Just in case, we are reprinting the *Journal's* choices: *As a Career* (Office of Education pamphlet); *The Tenth Generation*; *Shall I Become a Teacher?* *In Praise of Teaching*; and, *FTA at Work in High Schools* (Personal Growth Leaflets).



USA: Measure of a Nation, edited by Thomas R. Carskadon and Rudolf Modley (Macmillan), a condensation of the 812-page volume *America's Needs and Resources*, pre-

pared by J. Frederic Dewhurst and Associates, has been released by the Twentieth Century Fund. This 101-page booklet is recommended to core teachers, or those concerned with the social studies. The large print, elementary language and concepts, and the easily-read graphs and caricatures on almost every page make the booklet a valuable reference to students wishing to gain information about this country's wealth, debts, resources, and needs, in the present and in projected 1960. (Write to the Fund at 330 West 42 St., New York 18).



To those interested in reading *about* language and to others who desire a store of anecdotes about language to serve as motivation for their students who are learning to *use* language, we recommend *Word Study*. This pamphlet publishes short articles and letters—some technical—by scholars of language throughout the country, with additional material supplied by the editor, Max J. Herzberg. Frankly an advertising medium of the G. C. Merriam Company, the eight-page periodical is free to teachers of English. Send inquiries, giving teaching connection, to the Company at Springfield 2, Mass.



"Education, Dynamic of Democracy" will be the theme of the annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City, February 25-March 2. Pressing school problems will be discussed in more than 60 conference groups, with problems of smaller school systems coming in for special attention, at the convention. The general program will include as speakers Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Branch Rickey, and Senators Margaret Chase Smith and Wayne Morse. An exhibit of modern educational books, equipment, and supplies is being planned as part of the convention.



A Portfolio of Teaching Techniques, a 60-minute in-service refresher course "to invigor-

ate teaching in the Nation's classrooms," has been released by the publisher of the *Educator's Washington Dispatch*. The *Portfolio* includes descriptions of role-playing in the classroom and the uses of group dynamics—applied successfully in industry and more recently in education. A Letter to Teachers based on the opinions of 10 American educators concerning the teaching job, A Checklist for Better Teaching, suggestions for creating an atmosphere in which teachers can teach and children can learn better, suggestions on organizing a classroom of 30 pupils or more for effective learning, and ways in which teachers can apply sociodrama for passing on basic facts, refine skills, and establish attitudes are included in the *Portfolio*.

Contributors to the *Portfolio* include: J. Murray Lee, Dean, School of Education, State College of Education, Pullman Washington; Dorris May Lee, co-author of *The Child and His Curriculum*; Herbert A. Thelen, University of Chicago; Mildred Fenner, N. E. A.

Copies of the *Portfolio* (36p.) are available at 75c each from the *Educator's Washington Dispatch*, 501 Dupont Circle Building, Washington 6.

Pi Lambda Theta, National Association for Women in Education, has announced that it will grant two awards of \$400 each this year for significant studies on "Professional Problems of Women," either in education or in some other field. Requests for information should be addressed to Alice H. Hayden, Chairman Committee on Studies and Awards, University of Washington, Seattle 5.

Latest publication in the Teachers College, Columbia University, Parent-Teacher Series of booklets to be released is *Getting Along in the Family*, prepared by Ruth Allcott. Designed for both parents and teachers, the pamphlet is written in clear, direct language on a problem facing all who deal with children and youth. In the words of the author: "This booklet will describe the ways in which some people have built up those elements we all want in our family life. It will not say that these are the only ways—no two families are alike—but it will say that such ways have worked for some people and that perhaps they will work for others. It will tell about real people, but it will not use their real names."



Two recent additions to the Life Adjustment Series, published by Science Research Associates (228 So. Wabash, Chicago 4), are *Money and You*, by J. K. Lasser and S. F. Porter, and *Growing Up Socially*, by Ellis Weitzman.

Money and You discusses, in language comprehensible to the advanced middle grades, the source of money, budgets, how to spend money wisely, points to remember in saving, and the importance of habit in money management.

Growing Up Socially discusses the importance of social maturity, how to estimate one's social maturity, and the social world in which we live.

Both pamphlets are accompanied by an Instructor's Guide to assist the teacher or group leader in their work with young people on these particular problems.

(Continued from Page 90)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>9. Narrative
 "The Boy and His Stomach"</p> <p>10. Narrative
 "Rabbit School," marionette show</p> <p> (1) Characters: Peter Rabbit, Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Peter Rabbit II, Peter Rabbit III, Mother Goose, Gingerbread Boy, Red Riding Hood</p> <p> (2) Songs: Adaptations to tune of "Home On The Range"</p> | <p>11. Narrative
 Marionette number
 Characters: Spanish Senorita, Spanish Maid</p> <p>12. Narrative
 "A Bunch of Golden Keys," reading in unison by class</p> <p>13. Narrative
 Marionette number
 (1) Characters: Dancing Girl, Clown
 (2) Song: "Heel and Toe"</p> |
|--|---|

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

(Continued from Page 127)

Madge Gradon, Consultant Elementary Education, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, Washington.

Leland Jacobs, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Lillian Oleson, Elementary Education, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

For Members of the NCTE Board of Directors
(Two to be elected)

May Hill Arbuthnot, Western Reserve University, Cleveland 6, Ohio.

Agnella Gunn, Boston University, Boston Massachusetts.

Marian Jenkins, Los Angeles County Schools, Los Angeles, California.

Katharine Koch, Philips School, Mishawaka, Indiana.

Review and Criticism

[Reviews and annotations in this issue are by Celia B. Stendler, Dorothy Hinman, Ralph H. Thompson, Kathryn Hodapp, and Elizabeth Guilfoile.]

For the Teacher

Children's Experiences Prior to First Grade and Success in Beginning Reading. By Millie Corinne Almy. Contributions to Education No. 954. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. New York: Cloth, \$2.35.

The vast amount of research on reading readiness is an indication of the tremendous importance placed upon reading in our primary curriculum. All too much of the research, however, has concentrated on minute and isolated problems, in many cases unrelated to what we know about child growth and development. Dr. Almy's is a fresh approach and one that sees reading as a "continuous process of reorganization, in which reaching out for new experience is, at least in part, dependent on what has gone before."

The hypothesis to be tested in *Experiences and Beginning Reading* was, "Learning to read in first grade is positively related to the number of responses to opportunities for reading the child makes prior to first grade entrance. The kinds of activities in which the child participates influence his approach to learning to read in first grade." Dr. Almy's findings, based upon parent and child interviews in a public school situation, show that there is a positive relationship between the child's responses to reading opportunities prior to first grade and his success in learning to read. Not only such pre-school experiences as looking at books and magazines, or being read to, contribute to later reading success, but also the opportunity to have questions answered regarding words, letters, numbers on signs, cans, packages, and table

games are important in the reading process. Reading in the home situation for many children is directly related to the needs and purposes of the child; he grows into reading as naturally as he learns to talk.

The implications of this study for classroom teachers are many. For one, we might question the attitude of many primary teachers that parents should do nothing about reading before the child enters school. Rather, it would seem, teachers might help parents to see the kinds of pre-school experiences which will contribute to later reading success. On the basis of this report, teachers might question the worthwhileness of some of the commercial reading readiness materials. Both parents and teachers will find Dr. Almy's book richly rewarding, not only for the findings sketched here, but for its many insightful comments on reading and child development.

C. B. S.

The Education of The Poetic Spirit. By Marjorie L. Hourd. The New Education Book Club (International) 1 Park Crescent. London W. I. 10s 6d.

Let's-Read-Together Poems. Selected and Tested by Helen A. Brown and Harry J. Heltman. Row, Peterson and Company. \$2.00.

The Education of the Poetic Spirit, a very stimulating book by an English author, is an account of her experiences with young adolescents in creative expression. Miss Hourd deals with such topics as dramatic play making, creative writing and the like, and includes actual descriptions of classroom procedures for developing these activities with children.

The Education of the Poetic Spirit, however, differs from the usual book on creative activities in that the author shows the relationship between such activities and the emotional life of the child. She believes that good teaching rests

upon two kinds of understanding, an appreciation of the intrinsic values of the material to be taught and a knowledge of the nature of children. Both are admirably represented in this book; Miss Hourd combines Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and others with Freudian insights into child behavior. While many will find themselves in disagreement with some of Miss Hourd's methods, thoughtful teachers will find challenging psychological and philosophical comments on almost every page.

It is interesting to turn from *The Education of the Poetic Spirit* to *Let's Read Together Poems*. This is a collection of charming verse for choral reading in kindergarten and primary grades. The poems are grouped under such topics as Nursery Rhymes, Childhood Mystery and Experience, Living Things and Wee Folks and Magic. While the rhythm of the verses is delightful, in contrast to the richness of content in Miss Hourd's classes, the question might be raised as to whether these poems have much to offer children. In the field of poetry, as in the field of music, it may be that we have tended to talk down to children, instead of attempting to give them material which, while suited to their level of appreciation and enjoyment, might contribute more to their intellectual and emotional appetites. C. B. S.

For Early Adolescents

Buckey O'Neill of Arizona. By Jeanette Eaton. Illustrated by Edward Shenton. William Morrow, \$2.50.

This is an unusually good biography for young people because of the person it portrays, the fine ideals it emphasizes, and the suitable and excellent style. William Owen O'Neil, better known as Buckey O'Neil, rode into the little town of Phoenix, Arizona, on a very hot day in 1859. From that moment to the end of his short life every fiber of his fine being was devoted to transforming that disorderly and rough Territory into a law-abiding, respectable State. As newspaperman he not only supported ranch-

men, miners, and other Arizona citizens in every step toward advancement but instigated many procedures for betterment of business and society. As sheriff he brought law and order to a wild Territory. As promoter he opened the Grand Canyon to Eastern capitalists. As one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders, he died "for a new star in the flag." Jeanette Eaton, with vivid description and rapid action, has made Buckey O'Neill live again—a fresh and forceful personality in a young and vigorous region.

D. H.

"National Velvet." By Enid Bagnold. Illustrated by Paul Brown. William Morrow, \$3.00.

"National Velvet," published first in 1935 as a book for adults, was a selection of both the American Book of the Month Club and the English Book Society. In 1949 it was re-issued with the idea that it would be appealing to older boys and girls. The truth is it is appealing to the whole family.

Velvet, the fourteen-year-old daughter of an English butcher, wins a hitherto unwanted piebald at the village lottery. Although ungainly in appearance, the piebald has made himself an expert jumper and runner by repeated successful attempts to take leave of its country home to visit the village. More than anything in life, Velvet and her father's assistant, Mi, love horses. Their complete confidence in the lottery prize and Mi's ingenious scheming result in Velvet's riding the piebald to victory in the Grand National.

In spite of a plot so improbable that it is preposterous, the book is a far better than average one. The characters are skillfully and very sympathetically drawn. The sensible, practical mother; the selfless Mi; and native Velvet, inspired by her horse and completely unspoiled by international fame, are fine people for boys and girls to know. Even for upper-grade readers we cannot wish deleted the occasional spots of frankness; they are natural and necessary for the honest portrayal of a lower middle-class

family. The language of these plain English villagers is fascinating—delightful. On the whole, for young or old, the book is much more than just another horse story.

D. H.

Amazon Adventure. By Willard Price. John Day Company, \$2.50.

Hal and Roger Hunt are just well started down the Amazon with their father, who is in search of rare animals to sell alive to large zoos, when they are threatened by the representative of an unscrupulous rival company. The threat necessitates Mr. Hunt's immediate return to North America. Hal, Roger, and a group of natives continue down the Amazon in a large, awkward boat they call The Ark. They capture one creature after another—a vampire bat, a boa constrictor, an iguana, an anaconda, an electric eel—until The Ark is crowded. In spite of these valuable acquisitions, the expedition seems doomed to failure because of frequent unexplained misfortunes. In the end they can all be traced back to Croc, the rival, who had been attempting to secure The Ark with its unusual cargo. When Hal is finally able to turn his enemy over to the law, he discovers Croc has already been charged with robbery, incendiarism, and murder.

The authentic experiences presented by Willard Price in this account of a trip through the Amazon jungle in themselves would offer to an adult sufficient excitement. The author's addition of the mystery and his too free use of coincidence to extricate the characters from every predicament of danger make most of the story unconvincing—even the accounts of the authentic incidents. But for the upper-grade boy—the more excitement, danger, and mystery the better. He will very likely judge this a rousing good adventure story.

D. H.

Look Out for the Ostriches: Tales of South Africa. By Jan Juta. Illustrated by Henry C. Pitz. Knopf.

Advanced readers in the upper grade of the

elementary school and in the junior high school will find in these tales by Jan Juta the exciting and beautiful atmosphere of the South African veld. The author's style conveys a realistic picture of his adventures with animals of the veld and native tribes, as well as his daily experiences as a youth in Capetown. Although even the advanced readers mentioned may find some of the vocabulary and concepts difficult, they will enjoy the natural beauty and drama of these tales.

R. H. T.

Young Thack. By Jean Gould. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.75.

An interesting biography of William Makepeace Thackeray for older readers. The story begins when Thackeray is six years old and is leaving India to go to school in England and ends with his death on Dec. 23, 1863. His school life, his friends, his love affairs, his travels, his marriage, and his writings are told in such an entertaining manner that the reader feels he is reading a novel, not a biography. Illustrated with Thackeray's own sketches.

K. H.

Crocodile Crew. By Richard Watkins. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50.

Water hyacinths and business rivals are the unmitigated villains of the piece. Don Willard and Sam Ford battle with both on the Inland Waterway in Florida in their efforts to build up an excursion trade with their launch, the Crocodile Queen. The baffling hyacinths, the furious hurricane, and the old boat are all much more realistic than the people in the adventure story for teen age boys.

E. G.

Sword In Sheath. By Andre Norton. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50.

An uncharted island and untold treasure was the final goal of the two young sleuths, Sam Marusaki, a Nisei Japanese, and his friend, Lawrence Kane. But when they left the United States their instructions were merely to find some record of the lost aviator, son of a mil-

lionaire. There is plenty of excitement in this story by a very facile writer, and the background, Dutch East Indies, is vividly portrayed.

E. G.

For the Middle Grades

When Coyote Walked the Earth. By Corinne Running. Illustrated by Richard Bennett. Holt, \$2.00.

When Coyote Walked the Earth is a collection of authentic tales of the Indians of the Northwest. They have to do with the age before man came to the earth, an age, according to these stories, when animals reasoned and talked and were preparing for the coming of the Indians by anticipating man's needs. These tales are mythlike in quality in that they explain the beginnings of a number of things. For example, there is an account of the origin of fire, one of how spring first came, one about the releasing of the water supply. Like all Indian myth material, there are stories explaining characteristics of animals and birds—how the elk came to have antlers, why the skunk is not dangerous, and why the snowbirds always live in thickets. Intermediate grade children will enjoy these short tales because they are why and how stories told in a lively, attractive fashion.

D. H.

The Little Grey Man. By Denys Watkins-Pitchford. Illustrated by the author. Scribner, \$2.50.

Sneezewort, Baldmony and Dodder were three little gnomes who lived in Tree House under an oak root on Folly Brook. They missed their brother, Cloudberry, who had gone to find the source of their stream and had not returned. They built a boat in order to go and hunt him. At the last minute Dodder decided not to go as he had only one leg. After the departure of Sneezewort and Baldmony, Dodder started after them on foot. He overtook them in Crow Wood, where, with the help of Pan, the

Giant Grum was overcome. After many adventures, the gnomes regretfully turned back home when winter started freezing the brook. There they found Cloudberry safe and sound. An unusually well-told imaginative tale illustrated in black and white by the author.

K. H.

Here Come the Perkinses! By LeGrand Henderson. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.50.

A good story of the Maine coast concerning the Perkins family and especially the children, Alonzo and Lula. Cap'n Perkins reoutfits their schooner in order to take summer people on cruises. The trouble Alonzo has been having with Bucktooth Dilley is increased when his father is signed on as first mate for the initial voyage. With the help of passengers, Alonzo and Lula keep the boat from being smashed on the rocks as Bucktooth and his father had planned.

K. H.

It Looks Like This. by Irma E. Webber. William R. Scott, Inc.

A book of design showing the animals as they appeared to four mice who lived in different parts of the barn. It wasn't until they all saw the cat that they found out that one thing can look different ways—as many different ways as there are ways to look at it. Will be useful in teaching perspective.

K. H.

For Younger Children

Mother Goose. Illustrated by Sass-Dorne Studios. Random House, \$1.00.

The highly stylized illustrations and the inclusion of selections which have adult rather than child appeal make this Mother Goose different at least from the standard editions. It is attractive in format and cheap in price. There is a wealth of material to choose from, and perhaps most people who read to young children would choose for them the verses that are appropriate.

E. G.

Luncheon and Program
of the
National Conference on
Research in English
Tuesday February 28, 1950
12:00 Noon

Ambassador Hotel
Venetian Room

Theme: Research in Language Development

Presiding: Harold A. Anderson, President, National Conference on
Research in English, University of Chicago

*

Presentation of Conference Research Bulletins
by Committee Chairman

Readability, Edgar Dale, Ohio State University (10 min.)

Readiness in Reading and Related Language Arts, Nila Banton Smith,
New York University (10 min.)

Education and Mass Media of Communication. John J. DeBoer, University
of Illinois (10 min.)



Speakers

"What Research Shows about Language Development" J. Conrad Seegers,
Dean, Teachers College, Temple University (30 min.)

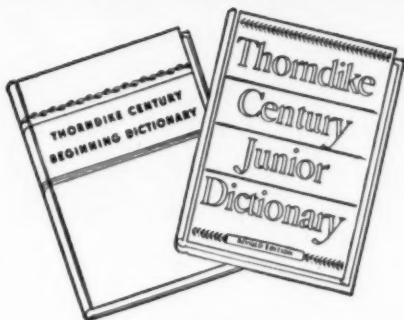
"Research Concerning the Interrelationships among the Language Arts",

A. Sterl Artley, Director of the Child Study Clinic,
College of Education, University of Missouri (30 min.)



Luncheon Tickets \$2.75. Tickets may be secured at the Registration
Headquarters, Atlantic City Auditorium before (?) Tuesday, February 28.

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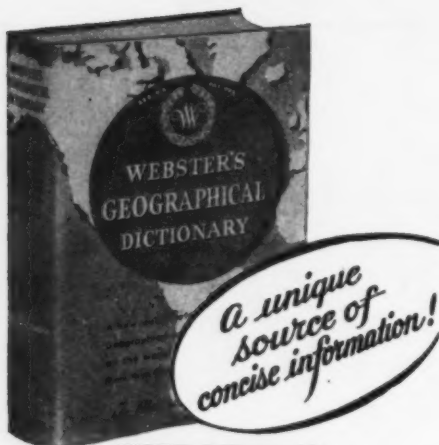
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